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THE QUEENS OF ENGLAND.



J W Wright

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ISABELLA OF FRANCE.

Queen of Edward 2nd

LONDON VIRTUE & CO

THE

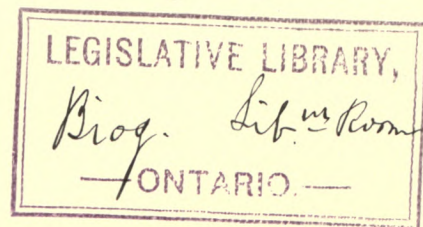
QUEENS OF ENGLAND.



Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey.

VOL. I.

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THE

QUEENS OF ENGLAND

BY

SYDNEY WILMOT

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WITH STEEL ENGRAVINGS

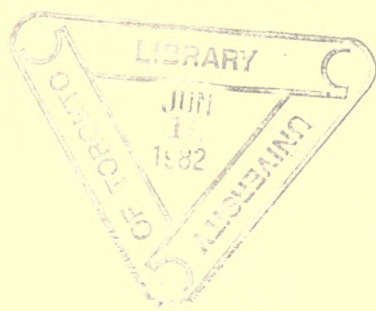
IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

LONDON

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INTRODUCTION.

A MORE complete and therefore a more exact knowledge of a country is sometimes acquired by the humble pedestrian who saunters leisurely among its by-paths than by him who merely drives along the main road. So it is hoped the kind reader of these memoirs will gather from them many an interesting fact which would have escaped his notice while he remained on the highway of history.

In these biographies of the Queens of England (the most complete ever yet issued) it has been the aim of the present writer to relate faithfully the life-story of each of those illustrious ladies who have worn either the crown regal or the crown matrimonial, from Matilda of Flanders, consort of William I., to our own most gracious sovereign, Queen Victoria.

In these days the public is athirst for knowledge, but there is so much to be read and learnt about everything that life is far too short for any but the professional student of history to give up sufficient time to wade through pages of public and private letters, long extracts from State papers, or the rambling gossip of contemporary chroniclers. And again, nine times out of ten we take up a book for amusement, though our enjoyment is increased if we feel ourselves to be gleaning information as well as pleasure. Bearing these facts in mind, the author has sought to mould from the large mass of material at his command a series of narratives which, unshackled by worrying notes or tiresome references to authorities, yet embody so much of anecdote and detail as serves to illustrate the character of the subject, revealing here and there that "touch of nature" which "makes the whole world kin," and thus making each memoir the story of a real person rather than a heap of dry bones such as might be gathered from a biographical dictionary.

The task has not been without its difficulties. In the case of many of the earlier Queens only the mere outlines of their lives can be traced with certainty. A "series of ingenious guesses," of which George Eliot cynically remarked that history was made up, might yield us many a pretty romance, but the love of minute accuracy which characterises the fashion of the time will tolerate no deviation from the path of truth. Of the Tudor

Queens we have all the information we could wish. Their tastes and their tempers, their sayings and doings on all notable occasions, and even their thoughts and feelings, have come down to posterity through the writings of trustworthy chroniclers; but in the case of their successors evidence is not so reliable, because from the outbreak of the Revolution in the time of Charles I. until the establishment of the present dynasty every one who took pen in hand to record passing events was a warm partisan of one side or the other, either lauded all the Stuarts as though they were a family of saints and martyrs, or execrated them as wicked despots, traitors to their country, and unworthy of the least sympathy. Again, in the more recent past many private letters and domestic records of our Hanoverian Queens are still withheld from the gaze of the curious.

As in this portrait gallery will be found specimens of nearly every style of female beauty, so the reader will meet with almost every variety of character and disposition. It is pleasing to be able to note that the greater number of the ladies who have sat on the throne of England have occupied their exalted position with credit to themselves and benefit to the country; but amidst the commonplace events of everyday life, records of births, marriages, and deaths, there is no lack of those thrilling incidents and tragic scenes, tales of love and hate, of passionate revenge and heroic self-sacrifice, which amply verify the old saying that truth is stranger than fiction.

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THE QUEENS OF ENGLAND.

I.

MATILDA OF FLANDERS.

FEW of the Queens of England can claim a more illustrious descent than this princess. Her father, Baldwin the Gentle, Earl of Flanders, was, through his mother, grandson of Richard II., Duke of Normandy; and her mother was Adelais, daughter of Robert, King of France; on one side or the other she was related to most of the royal families of Europe.

Gifted with much natural ability, Matilda received an education greatly superior to that of most princesses of her age. William of Malmesbury, the old chronicler, writes: "She was a singular mirror of prudence in our days, and the perfection of beauty."

One glance at the portrait of Matilda, queen of William the Conqueror, prepares us to believe the glowing description, unanimously given by historians, of her personal charms and mental virtues.

She had refined, delicate features, a well-set head, and a graceful figure. In her dress of state she would have compared favourably with a Greek statue. A vestal stole, with close sleeves and simply gathered at the throat, formed the under-garment for a robe which swept the ground, its rich fulness confined at the waist by a handsomely gemmed zone; graceful falling sleeves but partially concealed the shapely arms. Her loosely curling hair parted in the middle, and a flowing transparent veil fell on the shoulders from the back of the head, where it was confined by an elegant circlet of gems.

The Earl of Flanders was a rich and powerful prince, and skilful in the arts of peace no less than in those of war. He built the town of Lille, where his daughter passed her early years, and from him she inherited that talent for architecture which she afterwards turned to such good account.

To this town of Lille, in the days of Edward the Confessor, came a young Saxon noble-

man called Brihtric, surnamed, from the fairness of his complexion, "Meaw," or "Snow." With this stranger the youthful princess fell violently in love, and his rank and fortune were such as to render him a fitting suitor. But the dark eyes of the Flemish maiden had no attraction for Brihtric, or perhaps his heart was already in the keeping of some lady in his native land. Be that as it may, he had no mind to marry Matilda, though the dowry her father would give her was a handsome one. Brihtric returned to England, and perhaps entirely forgot the lady. But Matilda came of a proud and revengeful line, and although she in course of time conquered her attachment, she did not forget the wound to her pride. Years afterwards, when William the Conqueror was distributing English lands among his followers, his wife obtained from him the grant of all Brihtric's lands and honours. She then caused the unfortunate nobleman to be seized in his manor of Hanelye and conveyed to Winchester. The manner of his death is not recorded, but his burial was private. Also Matilda deprived his city, Gloucester, of its charter and civic liberties, probably for showing some sign of resentment at his fate. This is almost the only stain which history shows on an exceptionally virtuous character; and without seeking to exonerate her from blame in the matter, we ought to take into account the rude manners of the feudal ages, when indulgence in the fiercer passions was regarded as indicative of high and noble spirit, and the Church was ever ready to forgive the offences of her liberal supporters.

Such was the young girl whom the clever, ambitious Duke William of Normandy sought in marriage. Her father was well pleased with the offer, but when he spoke of it to Matilda she, perhaps still thinking of the young Saxon, replied with infinite disdain that "she would not have a bastard for a husband." This speech found its way to the ears of her suitor, but although his illegitimacy was a very sore point with him, opposition only strengthened his determination to secure the lady for his wife, and seven long years did he continue his suit. There is a story, differing slightly in detail according to different historians, as to the mode in which he revenged himself for her disdain. Making his way to her presence, either in her father's palace or as she was returning from church, he gave her a sound beating and spoiled all her rich clothing. Her father, hearing of this unprecedented outrage on his daughter, made a hostile attack on William's dominions, but wise counsellors soon restored peace between them, and when the Duke again renewed his suit and the proposal was named to the damsel, she replied, to the astonishment of all, that "it pleased her well." The matrimonial treaty was speedily concluded, Matilda bringing to her husband a large portion in lands, money, jewels, and rich array; also, what was politically far more important, the perpetual friendship of Flanders, which meant peace

to Normandy on the north. The alliance with his cousin also strengthened William's defective title to the dukedom of Normandy, and was made just in time to ward off hostilities with Philip of France; and that king, dying shortly afterwards, left his young son Henry under the guardianship of Baldwin, William's ally. Thus relieved from outside troubles, William was able to consolidate his power at home and prepare for the conquest of England, which, but for his fortunate marriage, he might never have been able to undertake.

The marriage ceremony was performed at the castle of Angi, a fortress situated at the extreme corner of the Duke's dominions, and better known to us as the Château d'Eu, the family residence of Louis Philippe of Orleans, sometime King of the French. Hither William repaired with his retinue to await the arrival of his bride from Flanders. The Princess arrived accompanied by her father and mother and a splendid train of ladies and nobles. They were married in the church of Nôtre Dame d'Eu, in the presenee of both Courts, in the year 1050, Matilda being then about nineteen years of age, and William twenty-five. During the wedding feast Earl Baldwin laughingly asked his daughter how it fell out that, after her scornful refusal, she had at last so readily consented to the marriage. "Because," said Matilda, "I did not know the Duke then so well as I do now; for," she added, "he must be a man of great courage and high daring who could venture to come and beat me in my father's own palace." This incident certainly gives encouragement to those who believe the ancient saying,

"A dog, a woman, and a walnut-tree,
The more you beat them the better they be."

The wedding mantle, garnished with jewels, also that worn by her husband, together with his helmet, were long preserved in the treasury of Bayeux.

William conducted his newly-married Duchess from Eu to Rouen, where she made her public entry into the capital as his bride; her parents were also of the party, and remained several days to join in the festivities and witness the pageantry and the rejoicing with which Matilda was received. From this moment till the day of her death Matilda remained popular with her Norman subjects and a faithful and affectionate wife to her lord. When her parents had returned home, her husband was proud to take his beautiful bride on a royal progress through his dominions, and a happy honeymoon it must have been, for Matilda showed herself able and willing to sympathise with all his projects, social and political. She won and retained through life William's respect and esteem as well as his affection, and became the patroness of learning and all the arts of peace for which William's military and political duties left him but scant time; yet this prince was

by no means illiterate, indeed he is said to have read Cæsar's Commentaries in the Latin at a very early age. Also his passion for architecture, in which she participated, was another bond of union, and they were destined to have ample opportunity to display it.

Before the couple had long enjoyed the happiness of married life, a cause of annoyance arose. Manger, Archbishop of Rouen, had done all in his power to hinder the union, and now he strove to mar it by pronouncing sentence of excommunication against the parties on the plea that they were more closely related than the regulations of the Church permitted. William indignantly appealed to the Pope, employing Lanfranc, afterwards the good and great Archbishop of Canterbury, but then an obscure individual, to negotiate for him; and the young cleric conducted his mission with such ability, that the Bishop of Rome promised free pardon to the offenders on condition that each should build and endow an abbey, the one for men and the other for women. Accordingly William founded the Abbey of St. Stephen's, for a fraternity of monks, making Lanfranc abbot; and Matilda that of the Holy Trinity, for nuns, both being situated at Caen, within a mile of one another. Matilda took immense pride and delight in the progress of these stately buildings, and the foundations laid under her direction are among the most splendid relics of Norman grandeur. As to the offending prelate who had dared to attempt to invalidate their marriage, William and Matilda did not suffer him to escape their vengeance. A council of Norman bishops was summoned, and Manger was accused before them of misappropriating Church property and forthwith disgraced.

Matilda became the mother of four sons and five daughters. The birth of Robert, the eldest, surnamed Courthose, was hailed with much rejoicing, but this prince afterwards proved the one source of trouble between husband and wife. Matilda was most careful that her children should be carefully nurtured, and greatly interested herself in their education. The birth of Robert was followed in quick succession by that of Richard, William Rufus, Cecilia, Agatha, Constance, Adela and Gundred; Henry, the youngest, was born in England after the conquest.

The first thirteen years of Matilda's married life passed quietly enough. Normandy enjoyed the blessing of peace, so rare in the Middle Ages, and under William's wise and energetic government, trade and agriculture greatly prospered. The Duke superintended the building and organizing of fleets, improved the harbours, and even built at Cherbourg, at his own expense, the first pier ever constructed. All this with an eye to enlarging his borders beyond the sea. At length, in 1065, chance threw in his way the very opportunity William wanted. Harold Godwinson was wrecked on the coast of

Normandy and fell into his power. While treating his guest-prisoner with the utmost show of courtesy, the Duke left him with no alternative but to conform to his will, and the famous oath, by which Harold agreed to renounce all claim to the crown of England and assist William in obtaining it, was no doubt wrung from him under fear of death.

Thus, the next year, when the news of Edward the Confessor's death was brought to Normandy, much of William's preparation for the invasion of England was already made. Matilda exerted herself to the utmost in assisting her husband to overcome the reluctance of the Norman barons to follow their lord "beyond the sea," a form of service not included under their oaths of fealty.

Amongst the invitations which William issued to the rulers of the neighbouring states, with promises of rich spoils and good pay, to aid in the undertaking, was one to the King of France. Philip treated the idea that William could annex England as altogether chimerical, and asked him, "Who would take care of his Duchy while he was running after a kingdom?" To this sarcastic question William retorted, "That is a care that shall not need to trouble our neighbours; by the grace of God we are blessed with a prudent wife and loving subjects, who will keep our border securely during our absence." And this was no vain boast, as the sequel will show.

In those days of superstition, no undertaking could be commenced without the blessing of holy Church to inspire the faint-hearted and silence evil-foreboders. Early in the warm pleasant month of September the little port of St. Vallery was crowded with ships, soldiers, and priests. The bones of the patron saint of the town and other revered relics were brought forth to the sea beach, and the prayers of the devout and the alms of the charitable were freely offered in petition for a favourable wind. In the midst of his anxieties a pleasant surprise awaited the Duke. His loving wife had caused a fine ship of war to be secretly built and equipped, and now sailed in it to the port of embarkation, and herself presented her gift. It was called the *Mora*. At the prow of the vessel was the effigy of their youngest son, William, executed in gilded bronze, holding a trumpet to his lips with one hand and with the other clasping a bow with the arrow pointed towards England. As if to complete the good omen for the ship, the very day of its presentation the long-wished-for wind arose. During the night the *Mora* outstripped her convoy, and at daybreak the Duke found himself alone in mid-sea. Somewhat alarmed, he ordered the master of the ship to go to the topmast; his report was not encouraging. He could see "nothing but sea." "Go up again," said William, "and look out." The man called out that he saw "four specks in the distance, like the sails of ships." "Look once again,"

shouted William, and the master exclaimed, "I see a forest of tall masts and a press of sails bearing gallantly towards us."

Before leaving Normandy, William had appointed Matilda as the regent of his dominions, begging "that he and his companions in arms might have the benefit of her prayers and the prayers of her ladies, for the success of the expedition." He also nominated as military chief in his absence, Robert, their eldest son, then just thirteen years old.

And well and wisely Matilda filled her post; so satisfactorily, indeed, that during the remainder of her life she resided almost entirely in Normandy and looked after her husband's interests while he was detained in England by the constantly recurring intrigues and revolts.

William was crowned King of England in Westminster Abbey soon after the Battle of Hastings; and it was well that the ladies of the Court were not present at the ceremony, for the Norman guards stationed without the building mistook the loud, if not very sincere, acclamations of the Saxon nobles for the beginning of a fray, and set fire to the neighbouring buildings, and in the confusion which followed many lives were lost. But the Conqueror wished his lady to share the honours of the crown, so in the following year she and her children came over to England, and at Winchester Matilda was presented to her new subjects, and William caused himself to be re-crowned with her amid great pomp and feasting. The Saxons were at first unfavourably inclined towards the new Queen. She was styled "*Regina*," or "*la Roïne*," a word which to them conveyed the idea of one ruling in her own right. The term *Queen* comes from a Saxon word meaning companion; and to their minds the wife of the King should be merely "the lady his companion." However, by her grace and tact Matilda soon won their respect and deference. Up to this time William's Court had been merely the military headquarters, so the advent of the ladies was made the occasion for those festivities and shows dear to all revellers in feudal times. The brilliant ceremony was appointed for Whit Sunday, when the days were bright and long. It combined the festival of the Church with social rejoicings. The Norman nobles conducted Matilda to the church, but after Aldred, Archbishop of York, had performed the rite, she selected her attendants from among her English subjects. William was in an unusually gracious mood and conferred favours on all who asked them. Then was established the hereditary office of Champion, which continues to this day. His duty is thus described: "When the noble company had returned from church and were seated at dinner in the banqueting hall, a bold cavalier called Marmion, rode into the hall, and did at three several times repeat this challenge:—'If any person denies that our most gracious

sovereign lord, William, and his spouse Matilda, are King and Queen of England, he is a false-hearted traitor and a liar; and here I, as champion, do challenge him to single combat.' ” As might be expected, no one came forward to oppose him.

The revenue which Matilda derived from her office as Queen of England was considerable, for although she lived mostly in Normandy, the city of London furnished her with sums to provide oil for her lamp, wood for her hearth, and she received tolls on goods landed at Queenhithe. She also enjoyed the tenth part of every fine voluntary paid to the crown. This does not sound very much; but we must remember that, under the feudal system, every event, such as a birth, death, or marriage, was made the occasion for a fine or compulsory gift, from the family holding any property, to its liege lord. William, in the settlement of England, had taken care that the lands with which he rewarded his followers should be subject to these claims, payable to himself personally.

The one cause of difference between William and Matilda was Robert, their eldest born, of whom his mother was devotedly fond. This prince seems to have inherited too much of his father's masterful spirit to walk quietly in the paths of filial obedience and submission. His early promotion to military power over Normandy fostered his arrogance and self-importance. William, before starting for England, had solemnly promised this son the succession to his dukedom. When his father was firmly established in England, Robert, backed by those who were dissatisfied with their share of spoil in the new country, or had other grievances against the absentee Duke, demanded the fulfilment of the promise at once, and broke into open rebellion. Another cause of offence to young Robert was that William, his brother, was the father's favourite. William, with that low cunning which always distinguished him, had the tact to see his own advantage in falling in with his father's wishes in a manner that the open-minded though wilful Robert would not stoop to. So there was no love lost between the brothers. One day young William and Henry, from an upper window, threw some dirty water on Robert and his partisans in the courtyard below. Robert chose to take this boyish trick as a studied insult, rushed into the palace and up the stairs and would have killed William had not the King interfered with drawn sword. Robert left the place in a rage. All Matilda's efforts at reconciliation were unavailing, and her woman's heart was torn between husband and child. Robert was generous and extravagant with all that he possessed, and his mother supplied him in secret with money and jewels from every source at her command. On one occasion King William intercepted her messenger, but the discovery of her weakness does not seem to have made any difference in his affection for her. One interview between father and son of which we have an account is anything but friendly. Robert, in his

arrogant fashion, demanded the instant fulfilment of his father's promise of the dukedom. The Conqueror harshly bade his son "remember the fate of Absalom, and not listen to evil counsellors who wished to seduce him from the paths of duty." Robert retorted rudely, that he did not come there "to listen to sermons, but to claim the investiture which had been promised him. "Answer me positively," he added; "are not these things my right? Have you not sworn to bestow them on me?" "It is not my custom to strip till I go to bed," replied William; "and as long as I live, I will not deprive myself of my native realm Normandy; neither will I divide it with another. It is not to be borne, that he who owes his existence to me should aspire to be my rival in mine own dominions."

After this Robert collected arms and money from the neighbouring princes and met his father on the field of battle at Gerberoi. William was much surprised at his capacity as a leader. Robert, displaying great personal bravery, had thrust his spear through the arm of a tall powerful knight and succeeded in unhorsing him. Just as he was about to deal the death-stroke he recognised, in the wild and angry cry of his antagonist, his own father. Robert at once leapt from his horse and rendered all possible aid to the wounded man. The rebel was left master of the field; but so shocked by the thought of how nearly he had killed his sire, that he at once sought pardon. William, however, was not to be so easily propitiated. He had never before been unhorsed, and, in all his military career, had never been wounded, so pride would not let him pardon the degradation from his own son. Matilda used her influence to heal the breach, without avail, and the trouble seems to have preyed on her mind. Illness seized her, and she became weaker and weaker. When William, in England, received word that her life was in danger, he hurried to Normandy. Discovering the cause of the malady he wrote a letter with his own hand to Robert, inviting him "to repair to Rouen, and receive a full pardon for his late rebellion, promising at the same time to grant him anything he could expect from the affection of a father consistent with the duty of a king." Robert at once availed himself of the invitation, and Matilda's health for a time revived. In 1083 grief for the early death of her daughter Constance, Duchess of Bretagne, and fresh troubles between Robert and his father again affected Matilda's mind, and in November of the same year she died, after a lingering illness.

The Queen had very little property to bequeath, as the bulk of her lands was already settled on her youngest son, Henry. Her few garments of value and some personal jewels she left to the Abbey of Holy Trinity, in which she had always taken such pious and affectionate interest, and it was within its sacred precincts that her remains were deposited, her daughter Cecilia being abbess at the time.

Matilda did not live long enough to complete the famous piece of needlework, the Bayeux tapestry, which has always been associated with her name. This remarkable monument of the industry of the queen and the ladies of her court is now preserved in the public library at Bayeux. A coloured engraving, the size of the original, may be seen any day in London at the South Kensington Museum. It is seventy-two yards long and over half a yard wide, and was intended to hang all round the interior of the cathedral of Bayeux, and represents the various incidents in the conquest of England by William. We may laugh at the grotesque figures and the unnaturally stiff proportions of animals and buildings, ships and trees, but as a pictorial history it is more minute than any written document, and gives a fair idea of the dress and customs of the time, even after due allowance has been made for the fading of the colours of the worsted during over eight hundred years.

The story it depicts opens with Harold, prior to his departure for Normandy, taking leave of Edward the Confessor. A tree serves to divide each scene. Next Harold appears accompanied by his attendants riding to Bosham with hawk and hound; then he is seen successively embarking from the Sussex coast, anchoring in France, and being made prisoner by the Earl of Ponthieu, redeemed by the Duke of Normandy and meeting with William at his court, assisting him against the Earl of Bretagne, swearing on the relics never to interfere with William's claims to the English throne, and finally re-embarking for England. The scene then shifts to London, where Harold narrates his adventures to Edward the Confessor, whose death and funeral obsequies we next see. Harold then receives the crown from the Saxon people and mounts the throne. Again we are in Normandy with William, who, on receiving the news, consults with Odo of Bayeux as to the invasion of England. Then come the active war preparations of the Normans, their embarkation, landing, march to Hastings and formation of a camp there. The battle and death of Harold form the last scene.

II.

MATILDA OF SCOTLAND.

TWO years after the conquest of England by William of Normandy, a small foreign ship, driven by adverse winds, cast anchor in the Firth of Forth. Down to the shore came the handsome King Malcolm Canmore, full of youthful curiosity to see the strangers and to offer to them the hospitality for which his country has always been renowned. Great was his surprise and interest to discover on board Edgar Atheling, his mother, and his sisters Margaret and Christina. These unfortunates of the Royal Saxon house of Alfred the Great told their tale; how, fearing treachery from the Norman, they had taken ship to cross the Channel on their way to Hungary, where their mother, a German princess, hoped to secure them a quiet retreat. Young Malcolm could sympathise with princes in adversity, for he had himself but just recovered the throne of his fathers from the usurper, Macbeth; the very same Macbeth with whose infamous murder of his master King Duncan, and subsequent remorse and tragic fate, Shakespeare has made us all familiar. Malcolm fell in love at first sight with Margaret Atheling, a maid with soft blue eyes and long fair hair, and on the third day after the arrival of the royal fugitives the King requested her hand in marriage of her brother Edgar. This solution of at least a part of the family difficulties was hailed with great pleasure, and consent to the union at once given. Margaret was a pious, gentle soul; she held her semi-barbarous lord in the bands of love till the day of her death, and by her Christian influence and example did much to soften the manners of the Scottish nobles. The King placed much reliance not only on her principles, but on her judgment, and entrusted to her all matters connected with domestic legislation.

Their eldest daughter, the story of whose life we now relate, was born about 1079, and inherited her mother's beautiful eyes and rich fair hair, as well as her gentleness and piety, not unmingled with the fearless daring befitting a scion of the old kings of Scotland. She was first named Edith, or Editha, but a change was made at her christening. It happened that Malcolm gathered a large army and made one of those plundering inroads on the



J.W. Wright.

W.H. Mote.

MATILDA OF SCOTLAND.

Queen of Henry I.

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north of England with which the Scots used to trouble their richer neighbours at all inconvenient seasons. William Rufus had employed his brother Robert to repel the attack; and the Duke of Normandy, finding that the Scottish army far outnumbered his own, with all the craft of his race, made peace with Malcolm, and sealed it by accepting the royal hospitality. Robert, an accomplished gentleman and man of the world, soon won the trust of the simple northerners, and became godfather to the infant Princess, who received the name of Matilda out of compliment to Robert's mother, Matilda of Flanders.

The young Princess was carefully trained by her mother in all piety, and by Turgot, Margaret's confessor, in the literature of the age. She was passionately fond of music, and devoted much time to the study of it. Turgot was a Saxon of good family; he was delivered to William the Conqueror as a hostage, and by him shut up in Lincoln Castle; thence he escaped to Norway, but returning penniless to England, he became a priest, and by learning and piety rose to be prior of Durham. Margaret was no sooner Queen of Scotland than she sent for Turgot to fill the office of spiritual adviser to herself, and ever afterwards the good man remained attached to her family, accompanying Matilda to England, and keeping near her after her marriage with Henry I.

We have mentioned that Edgar Atheling had two sisters; the second, Christina, who remained at Margaret's court, was remarkable for high spirit, rigid will and strong prejudices, and for religious asceticism. She became a black nun, and like most devotees, was anxious to bind others with the vows she had herself taken. She used all her influence to induce young Matilda to take the vows, and easily persuaded her gentle sister to yield to her will; but, when one day Matilda appeared before her father in the dress of a novice, he angrily tore off the veil, saying to Alan, Duke of Bretagne, who was present, "that he intended to bestow her in marriage, not to devote her to a cloister. This nobleman, a widower, and advanced in years, had come to the Scotch Court to propose for the hand of the young Princess, but she refused him.

Matilda was but sixteen years of age when great sorrow and misfortune befell her. Her mother, Margaret, was in very delicate health when King Malcolm started on one of his expeditions to the south, carrying with him their son Edward. His arms were favoured with success, and the town of Alnwick, which he was closely besieging, reduced to the last extremity. The inhabitants promised to give up the keys of the castle if the King would receive them in person. This Malcolm agreed to do. The Knight who brought them knelt and offered the keys on the point of his lance, and as Malcolm bent down to take them treacherously pierced his eye with the weapon, inflicting a mortal wound.

Margaret was dying when the fatal news reached Dunfermline, and she could not rest

till she knew the worst. Young Prince Edgar returned alone and approached her couch. "How fares it with the King and my Edward?" she asked, and receiving no answer she added, "I know all, I know all; yet by this holy cross I adjure you to speak out the worst." Here she held up that celebrated "black cross," which she had brought with her from England, and which she counted the most precious heirloom which her royal ancestors had handed down to her. "Both are slain," said the Prince; and with a prayer of resignation she expired. Shortly before her death Margaret called the good Turgot and consigned to his faithful guidance her two daughters, Matilda and Mary. Turgot thus records her words:—"Farewell! My life draws to a close, but you may survive me long. To you I commit the charge of my children. Teach them above all things to love and fear God; and if any of them should be permitted to attain to the height of earthly grandeur, oh! then, in an especial manner, be to them a father and a guide. Admonish, and if need be, reprove them; lest they should be swelled with the pride of momentary glory, offend their Creator, and forfeit eternal life. This, in the presence of Him who is now our only witness, I beseech you to promise and perform."

Donald Bane, a younger brother of Malcolm Canmore, taking advantage of the youth of the rightful heir, seized the throne of Scotland; and the children of the late king, with the faithful Turgot, sought refuge in England. Christina was at this time Abbess of Wilton, an office which had long been filled by one or other of the Saxon princesses. She was afterwards transferred to Romsey Nunnery, in Hampshire. Matilda and Maude found an asylum with their aunt, and she obliged them to conform to a rigid discipline and to continue their studies; she even insisted that Matilda should wear the thick black veil of a votaress, and persisted in her attempt to make the beautiful girl take the vows of a professed nun.

Seven dreary years did Matilda pass in the convent, but during that time she received two offers of marriage. One suitor was her old admirer, Alan of Bretagne, who obtained the consent of King William Rufus, but died before he could fulfil his engagement. The other was from the young and handsome William Warren, Earl of Surrey, son of Gundred, a daughter of the Conqueror, and one of the richest and most prominent barons of his time. The reason why Matilda refused the offer of this young and handsome nobleman is not very clear. Wilton Abbey is not very far from Winchester, and it is probable that the Scotch Princess frequently received visits from the royal Normans when in residence at Winchester. Her uncle, Edgar Atheling, supported the whole of his Scotch nephews and nieces out of his private purse; he passed much of his time in the society of his friend Robert of Normandy, Matilda's godfather, who appears to have taken an interest in the

girl, and the Duke's brother Henry may have been also privileged to see Matilda without the veil. As to the wearing of this cumbersome, ugly garment, she herself said she did so against her own inelination, under the compulsion of the Abbess Christina. "If I attempted to remove it," she added, "she would torment me with harsh blows and sharp reproaches. Sighing and trembling I wore it in her presence, but as soon as I withdrew from her sight I always threw it off and trampled upon it." And no wonder the tall, fair, graceful girl thus rebelled, for her face was not one to be hidden. Matthew Paris says, she was "very fair and elegant in person, as well as learned, holy and wise." Under these circumstances it is more than possible that the refined and elegant Henry Beaulere began his wooing of Matilda before the hunting accident to his brother William opened to him the way to the English throne. At any rate, he had scarcely secured his seat thereon before he proposed to Edgar, King of Scotland, for the hand of his sister. This prince had obtained possession of the throne of his father through the help of William Rufus. He at once gave his consent, but all things were not to go quite smoothly yet. The Abbess Christina, full of Saxon prejudices against the Norman line, protested "that her niece was a veiled nun, and that it would be an act of sacrilege to remove her from her convent."

Now an act of sacrilege in those days was not only a grave personal sin, but, for a sovereign who courted popularity, a serious political error. Nevertheless Henry was not to be easily baffled; he was resolved on the marriage, so he hastily ordered a council of the prelates of the realm to assemble at Lambeth, and laid the matter before them, Anselm, the archbishop, having pronounced the matter too grave for his personal decision alone.

It was a most unusual thing for a princess of the blood to appear as a witness before a public tribunal; but Matilda behaved herself well in the trying position, and by the straightforwardness of her answers, and the humility, yet dignity, of her demeanour won the sympathy of the assembly. She was asked "If she had embraced a religious life, either by her own choice or the vow of her parents;" and she replied, "Neither." Then she was examined as to the truth of her having worn the black veil. She freely admitted the fact, and went on to relate in girlish, artless fashion, the details of her aunt's treatment of her, and how she had only used the dress as a protection against unsuitable marriages. The learned council then gave their decision that Matilda, daughter of Malcolm, King of Scotland, had proved that she had not embraced a religious life either by her own choice or the vow of her parents, and was free to contract marriage with the King. To this verdict they added the following explanation: "When the great King William conquered this land, many of his followers, elated by so great a victory, and thinking that everything

ought to be subservient to their will and pleasure, not only seized the provisions of the conquered, but invaded the honour of their matrons and virgins whenever they had the opportunity. This obliged many young ladies, who dreaded violence, to put on the veil to preserve their honour."

Thus all censure of the Church was guarded against; but when it came to this point, Matilda exhibited some reluctance to enter the holy state of matrimony. This seems but natural; she had been virtuously brought up, and now for the first time reports reached her ears of the immoral life led by the prince who had charmed her maiden fancy. He even acknowledged the claims of twenty illegitimate children. But her hesitation could not have lasted long, for Henry had only been on the throne three months when the marriage took place. In November of the year 1100 the ceremony was performed in Westminster Abbey, but previous to the union the whole assembled company of nobles and ladies were kept listening to a lengthy sermon by the venerable Archbishop, in which he introduced the history and decision of the Church Council, concluding by asking the congregation in a loud voice, "whether any one objected to this decision?" From all parts of the building answer rose at once, "that the matter was rightly settled." Accordingly the royal pair were married, and the coronation of the Queen brought the rites of the Church to a close.

This marriage proved most important in the history of England. There is no doubt that sentiment apart, it was the most politic act by which Henry I. could commence his reign. This Prince had never possessed much influence and popularity in Normandy, and for that very reason, as well as his birth in England, inclined the down-trodden Saxons to look upon him much less unfavourably than they did on his elder brothers. Also, though down-trodden, the Saxons still formed the bulk of the population of England, they formed the bone and sinew of any force that could be raised in this country, and were now beginning to recover the exhaustion immediately following the Conquest. Thus Henry I., whose surname of *Beauclerc* was not an empty title, but one which he merited for patient research in all philosophy and political economy then known to scholars, was following a wise and enlightened policy in his alliance with Matilda, who was Saxon by sympathy as well as by birth. At the time of his marriage he granted to his Saxon subjects a very important charter, wherein he undertook to enforce the righteous laws of Alfred and Edward the Confessor. A copy of this document formed the simple model on which *Magna Charta* was afterward framed. Also he removed the obnoxious curfew, and made other merciful laws. All these improvements were attributed by the populace to the influence of the Saxon Princess, though it is most improbable that a mere Queen Consort

would have a powerful voice in such grave matters of state. At all events these concessions combined with the Saxon alliance to win Henry popularity, freed him from revolt, and produced that quiet in the land which his stern father and the despotic Rufus had failed to secure.

The wedded life of Matilda was very happy, Henry placing great confidence in his wife's affection and ability. In his frequent quarrels with Robert she continually took upon herself the office of mediator between the brothers. When Robert first returned from the Holy Land, learning that his brother had seized the English throne, he assembled a force and invaded the country. Landing at Portsmouth, he was about to besiege the city of Winchester. This was in the second year of Matilda's marriage, and she had retired thither for the birth of her eldest child, William the Atheling. As soon as Robert heard of the circumstance he at once relinquished his plans for storming the place, saying "that it should never be said he commenced the war by an assault on a woman in childbed, for that would be a base action." Matilda was duly grateful to the duke and joined with Archbishop Anselm in negotiating peace. For a time bloodshed was averted and the gay Duke invited to the English Court, where he spent many pleasant days in feasting and entertainment by the Queen, with whom he enjoyed much music and song. Matilda was a great patroness of all minstrels; indeed, she is sometimes accused of unduly favouring foreigners, because her encouragement of music attracted musicians of all nations to this country.

The Queen was noted for her piety and attention to religious exercises. She lavished money on the poor and needy, and founded several charitable institutions, particularly the hospital of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, Christ Church, and the Priory of the Holy Trinity in the Minories; but not content with these good deeds, she employed herself, particularly in Lent, with humiliating services, such as washing and kissing the feet of mendicants. Also in Lent she went every day from her palace to Westminster Abbey, barefoot and clothed in a garment of haircloth. During the seventeen years of her married life Matilda resided chiefly at the Westminster Palace. Part of this old building is still to be seen in the houses near Cotton Garden, and the lancet-shaped windows about Old Palace Yard. The ancient garden, Cotton Garden, was her quiet retreat, and a curious room in Cotton House used by Edward the Confessor as a private oratory, was employed by his niece for the same purpose.

The close friendship which Matilda enjoyed with Archbishop Anselm shows in what esteem that worthy and learned prelate held her. When differences arose between the Primate and the King, she did her best to heal them, and when Anselm returned

from exile the Queen went to the coast to meet him, and knowing him to be in feeble health herself made all arrangements to facilitate his journey. She was much disappointed that, on his restoration, Anselm issued harsh measures concerning the celibacy of the clergy, many belonging to the lower orders, chiefly Saxons, suffering excommunication for the offence. Two hundred of them appeared before Matilda barefoot in the streets of London, but she was powerless to help them. Six of her letters to Anselm are preserved in the works of the great churchman. Their style shows clearness and ability in composition, knowledge of Scripture and the writings of ancient philosophers.

Matilda's good works were not solely connected with religion; she built over the river Lea the first arched bridge seen in this country, and during Henry's frequent absences in Normandy she seized the opportunity of peace in the land to improve means of communication. Now that England is everywhere intersected with well kept, hedge-bordered roads, it is difficult to realise the danger of travel when, beyond the four great Roman ways, there were nothing but cart ruts, and these often imperfectly traced through bog, flood, or forest, to connect towns and villages. Matilda repaired the old roads and made many fresh ones, earning thus, more than in any other way, the title of "good Queen Maude."

Of the children of Henry I. and Matilda history mentions only two. William, fondly called by the Saxons "the Atheling," and Maude or Matilda, both of whom were fated to be unfortunate, though, happily for their mother, the evil did not happen in her lifetime. Young Maude, when only twelve years of age, was removed from her mother's care and married to the elderly Henry V., Emperor of Germany; but the young girl appears to have been very happy in her new home, and no shadow of the wars and wanderings of after years had yet come upon her. Her son William was a promising lad; he generally accompanied his father to Normandy, and, as the recognised heir of the duchy, had sworn fealty to the King of France, his liege lord; he distinguished himself in arms at the famous battle of Tinchebrai, when his father finally subdued all revolt in Normandy, and took prisoners Robert and his son, as well as all the great nobles of his party. About three years after his mother's death young William married Alice, daughter of the Earl of Anjou, amid great rejoicings. His father was in Normandy for the occasion, and when the feasts and pageants were over Henry and William both embarked for England, but in different vessels. The young Prince was in the *Blanche Nef*, the finest ship in the Norman navy, whose captain had boasted of her fast sailing. William, in high spirits, had ordered three casks of wine to be served to the crew, so that from the moment of starting the men were for the most part intoxicated. The Prince, anxious to overtake his father, who had started first in the celebrated *Mora*, pressed the master to crowd all sail

Suddenly the badly managed vessel struck on a rock. William was hurried by his attendants into a boat, and might have escaped, but amidst the darkness and roar of the waves he heard the voice of his illegitimate sister, the Countess of Perche, calling on his name for help ; his compassion was aroused, and he insisted on returning to her assistance. As they approached the sinking ship such numbers sprang into the boat that it was immediately swamped, and of all the gay party none were left to tell the tale but a poor butcher of Rouen, who clung to the mast and was rescued next morning by passing fishermen.

Matilda was also spared the knowledge of the cruel fate of her godfather, Robert of Normandy ; though he was in captivity during the latter part of her life, it was then as a prisoner of state. Her aged uncle, Edgar Atheling, who, fighting for his friend at Tinchebrai, fell into Henry's hands, received pardon and even a small pension from the King, in answer to the Queen's entreaties. Matilda no doubt represented that the weak-minded old prince had never possessed sufficient force of character to assert his own undoubted rights or to do any harm to anyone, though at the same time he had proved himself a generous relative and staunch friend.

There is but one portrait of Queen Matilda extant. It is to be found in the "Golden Book" of the Abbey of St. Albans, preserved in the British Museum, and was undoubtedly inserted to commemorate a royal visit to the place. Matilda is dressed in a royal scarlet mantle, cut square at the throat and lined with white fur. It covers the knees and is very long behind. A cordon, scarlet and gold, passes through two gold knobs. Beneath the mantle she wears a dark blue kirtle with light scarlet sleeves, and buttoned down the front with gold. A white veil, arranged to fall square on the brows, is fixed by a gold crown shaped like three large trefoils.

The last days of Matilda are somewhat sad to contemplate. Like her beautiful and saintly mother, she died in middle life. Her beloved husband and son often absent in Normandy, and her daughter gone beyond the seas, she fell into a melancholy and declining state of health, for which the physicians of the day could assign no cause. In the palace of Westminster, alone amidst all the splendours of royalty, she faded away, and expired May 1st, 1118. Her household was chiefly composed of Saxon ladies, three of whom, her attendants in her last illness, were so affected by her loss that they retired to a hermitage at Kilburn, near London. This became a priory in after years "for the reception of these three virgins of God, sacred damsels who had belonged to the chamber of Matilda, the good queen-consort of Henry I." We mention this circumstance to give some idea of the tone of the ladies who fell under the loving influence of this pious queen.

Matilda was buried in Westminster Abbey, near the mortal remains of her kinsman, Edward the Confessor. A careful study of history confirms this statement, though tablets were erected to her memory in several churches, notably Winchester and St. Paul's Cathedral. The old chronicler, Henry of Huntingdon, lauded her virtues in a Latin poem, of which the following quaint translation forms a part :—

“Prosperity could not inflate her mind,
Lowly in greatness, as in ills resigned :
Beauty deceived not, nor did crowns efface
Her best adornment, woman's modest grace.”

III.

ADELICIA OF LOUVAINE.

THIS princess was the second queen of Henry I., and styled the "Fair Maid of Brabant" by contemporary minstrels and poets, but history affords no authentic details of her personal appearance, and leaves us to spell out her life and character from what we know of her surroundings. She was the eldest daughter of Godfrey of Louvaine, Duke of Brabant and Lotheir, or Lower Lorraine, he being lineally descended from, and the lawful representative of, the mighty Charlemagne. This prince was for some years engaged in recovering Louvaine, the patrimony of his ancestors. His daughter was early remarkable for her skill in needlework, and a standard which she worked for her father became famous throughout Europe; it was in silk and gold, of curious and artistic design and tasteful execution. In the year 1129 it was captured by the Earl of Limbourg and the Bishop of Lorraine, and by them deposited in the church of St. Lambert, at Liege, where it was much valued and always used in processions on grand occasions, and might have remained to this day had not the church been destroyed by the barbarous fanatics of the French Revolution.

Adelicia is variously called by her chroniclers Adeliza, Alicia, Adelaide, Adelheite, Æthelice, or Adalais, all of which are local variations of a name meaning "most noble." She inherited the beauty and talents for which her family have always been celebrated.

Two years after the death of his first queen, Henry I. proposed for the hand of Adelicia, promising to settle on her a large dower, and coming in person to escort her to England. Her father at once accepted the brilliant offer; the lady's wishes were probably not consulted. The dominions of her father, though he was only an Earl, exceeded in size the present kingdom of Belgium, so we can hardly believe the young girl—she could not have been more than eighteen—would quit her home with great delight to be the wife of an elderly and morose man, although she would be a queen and preside over a wealthy court. Nor does Henry seem to have pretended anything like affection or fascination for her beauty or talent; his heart was buried with his loving Matilda and her son William, and

his mind entirely occupied with the idea of providing a male heir to his throne and wealth. Yet he appears to have treated Adelicia with all due respect, even though she failed to bear him any children.

In the autumn of 1120 Adelicia arrived in England, and was almost immediately privately married to the King at Ely, but the public ceremony was deferred till January of the next year; and at the coronation a scene took place highly typical of the rude manners of the twelfth century. Henry, always a better soldier than churchman, had selected for preferment an obscure priest whose chief merit was that he gabbled through the service and preached short sermons. This cleric, Roger le Poer, became a great favourite with the King, who advanced him to the bishopric of Salisbury and arranged for him to solemnize his second marriage. But Ralph, Archbishop of Canterbury, was highly indignant at the proposal. He hastily summoned a council, which settled that the King and Queen of England were parishioners of the Primate in whatsoever part of the country they may reside. Henry was forced to give in as to the marriage, but assigned to his favourite, Roger, the privilege of performing the coronation which was to shortly follow. Accordingly Roger, with characteristic expedition, was hurrying through the rite at Westminster, at an early hour, when the aged Ralph, despite his paralysis, came hastily into the church and demanded of the King "Who put the crown on his head?" Henry replied evasively, "If the ceremony had not been properly performed it could be done again." Some writers say that the Primate in a rage struck the crown from the royal head with a smart blow of his crosier. At all events, he insisted on himself recommencing the ceremony and completed it with gravity and reverence suitable to the occasion, and then crowned the young Queen in her turn.

Henry I. was very fond of the study of zoology, and enclosed a space of ground round the palace at Woodstock for a royal menagerie, which he stocked with every curious beast he could lay hands on. The chronicler quaintly put it: "The King craved from other kings lions, leopards, lynxes, and camels, and other curious beasts of which England hath none." In this collection Queen Matilda took no interest, but Adelicia wisely studied the tastes of her lord and endeavoured to adapt herself to his pursuits. A contemporary naturalist, Philippe de Ilman, composed a book to aid her in mastering the science. This is his courtier-like dedication:—

"Philippe de Thuan, in plain French,
Has written an elementary book of animals
For the praise and instruction of a good and beauteous woman,
Who is the crowned Queen of England, and named Alix."

While keeping Easter with his queen at Winchester, 1126, Henry received news that Fulke of Anjou, having given his daughter in marriage to William Clito, was heading an insurrection in favour of that prince. Adelia, left regent in England, showed her wisdom by following in the steps of her predecessor, thus securing good order and happiness throughout the realm. In the summer Adelia was summoned to Normandy, where Henry had quelled the disturbances, and on her return to England in September she was accompanied by the Empress Maude, lately a widow. This princess, then twenty-four years of age, was most reluctant to leave her adopted country. The German princes, among whom she had, we may say, grown up, were very loth to part with her, and even offered that, if she would marry one of them, her husband should be elected emperor. But her father had now been married to Adelia six years and she remained childless, so he insisted on Maude's coming back to England, and he summoned a Parliament for the express purpose of seeing her acknowledged as his successor. Maude had inherited all the pride and haughtiness of her Norman sire, and now gave him as much trouble as possible. Fortunately she took very kindly to her young stepmother, who, being about her own age, exerted over her the influence of a loving sister, without attempting to assume any authority.

The following Christmas was passed at Windsor, and Henry granted to Adelia, as a mark of his affection, the whole county of Salop—a clear proof that the childless wife was still in the royal favour. Maude obstinately remained in seclusion, “abiding continually in the chamber of Adelia,” says Matthew Paris, and again the German princes implored her to return. Henry was inflexible, saying that “she was his only heir, and must dwell among her own people.” Notwithstanding this statement he made arrangements soon afterwards for her marriage with Geoffrey of Anjou, and sent her to Normandy to fulfil the contract. Geoffrey was the son of Fulke of Anjou, who had so long been a thorn in the side of Henry's continental dominions; and the young man himself was a favourite with the King, being handsome, intelligent, and gay, and learned enough to enter into the pursuits of Beauclerc. His surname of Plantagenet, in after years the name of an English dynasty, he is said to have obtained from the custom of placing a plume of white broom in his helmet when hunting in the woods.

Maude went to Normandy, but Henry was obliged to go over there himself before she could be induced to marry Geoffrey. It is said that at the time she was in love with Stephen of Blois, who was unfortunately already a married man. This Stephen, the King's favourite nephew and afterwards ruler of England, had been the first to swear fealty to Maude. After her second marriage she was continually worrying Henry with

complaints of her husband, though Geoffrey was really the injured party, as she refused to behave to him with even common courtesy. In 1131 Maude scandalised Geoffrey's court by running away from her husband and seeking refuge with her father. If Queen Adelicia had not been specially kind, forbearing, and free from jealousy, she might easily have inflamed Henry's mind against this troublesome daughter; but instead she used all her influence as peacemaker, and with such success that Maude returned to Anjou. Two years afterwards she gave birth to a son, who was named Henry in honour of his grandfather. The King, immensely pleased with the heir, was somewhat comforted in his old age. Queen Adelicia must have found her married life rather trying, and experienced relief when her husband was detained abroad, for Henry's temper was very irritable and he suffered from bad dreams, was in constant fear of assassination, frequently changed his bed, and a sword and shield were always placed by his pillow. "In the year 1130 the King complained to his physician that he was sore disquieted of nights, and that he seemed to see a great number of husbandmen with their rustie tools stand about him, threatening him with the wrongs done against them. Sometimes he seemed to see his knights and soldiers threatening him; which sight so feared him in his sleep that oftentimes he rose undressed out of his bed, took weapon in hand, and sought to kill them he could not find. The physician, a notably wise man, expounded his dreams by true conjecture, and willed him to reform himself by alms and prayer."

King Henry I. died in Normandy, at the age of sixty-seven. Adelicia was not with him at the time, but she paid due respect to his memory, and gave a handsome sum of money to defray the expenses of keeping a lamp for ever burning before his tomb in the abbey church at Reading, which Henry had built and endowed specially for the purpose of receiving the royal remains.

The first year of her widowhood Adelicia passed in close seclusion at the convent and hospital of St. Giles, Wilton, which she had founded some years before. The house in which she lived is still known by her name. Afterwards the royal widow removed to Arundel Castle, which beautifully situated residence, with its estates, formed a part of her dower from Henry. She married in 1138 William de Albini, surnamed "Strong in the Hand," a noble of high renown and illustrious descent. His family had held the hereditary and honourable office of eupbearer to the Dukes of Normandy, and the Conqueror gave his father the same position in England, and had appointed him lord of Buckenham, in Norfolk. From this union sprang the Earls of Arundel, whose name stands first in the list of peers of England, and the family of the Howards, connected with so many important events in the history of this country.

Of this William de Albini an improbable story is told. He was present at the French court on the occasion of the marriage of Louis VII., when the gay Queen Adelaide falling violently in love with him, desired him to become her husband, but he refused on the plea that his troth was plighted to Adelia of England. Thereupon the lady was filled with rage and thirst for vengeance, so she decoyed him into a lonely part of her garden and suddenly pushed him into a cave where was a fierce lion. But Strong in the Hand was equal to the occasion. Winding his cloak round his arm, he thrust it into the animal's mouth and pulled out the tongue by the root. This wildly fabulous tale is made to account for the tongueless lion on the ancient armorial bearings of the house, but it is far more probable that De Albini adopted it for his wife from the arms of Louvaine.

By this marriage Adelia had a large family, and lived in retirement with her worthy husband chiefly at Arundel. They did not oppose the usurpation of Stephen, though the dowager-queen never appeared at his court.

In the year 1139, when his rival Maude came to Arundel, its master and mistress gladly opened their gates to her. Stephen, who was besieging Marlborough, at once hastened to the coast on hearing of her arrival. Adelia sent to him as he approached the castle entreating his forbearance, saying that she had admitted Maude not as his enemy, but as her daughter-in-law and early friend, who had claimed her hospitality, which respect to the memory of her late royal lord, King Henry, forbade her to refuse. If he came in hostile array against the castle of Arundel with intent to make Maude his prisoner, she was resolved to defend her to the last extremity; and she prayed Stephen, "by all the laws of hospitality and the ties of kindred, not to place her in such a painful strait as to compel her to do anything against her conscience, and that Maude might be allowed to leave the castle and retire to her brother." Stephen, perhaps unwilling to offend the powerful Albini, acceded to the request, and Maude was enabled to join the Earl of Gloucester and other adherents at Bristol.

Adelia died about 1151, probably at Affingham, in Flanders, where she had retired for a season of devotion to religious exercises. She was a friend to the poor and unfortunate, and left behind her the good name of a gentle, dutiful wife and loving mother.

IV.

MATILDA OF BOULOGNE.

THE reign of the usurper Stephen was a time of disturbance and trouble, of which his amiable queen bore her share nobly and patiently. By descent she was more than the equal of her husband. Called Matilda after her aunt, "Matilda the Good," queen of Henry I., she was the daughter of Mary, the younger daughter of Malcolm Canmore of Scotland. It will be remembered that this princess was educated at Romsey and Wilton with her sister. On Matilda's marriage, Mary shared her emancipation from convent life, and resided a few months at the English court before she became the wife of Eustace, Count of Boulogne. He belonged to an enterprising, noble house, whose members had frequently given trouble to their powerful neighbours of Normandy, till the First Crusade afforded some safe vent for their military ardour. Of the three brothers—Godfrey, Baldwin, and Eustace—who took part in the war against the Saracens, the two former wore in succession the crown of Jerusalem, and Eustace returned to enjoy the family estates. He was companion-in-arms of Robert of Normandy and Edgar Atheling, so a somewhat elderly husband for Mary of Scotland, and their only child was Matilda of whom we now write. She was educated in England at the Abbey of Bermondsey, where her mother, whose virtues are extolled in the Latin verses on her tomb, died and was buried. The rich young heiress was a brilliant match for Stephen, only the third son of the Count of Blois, and Adela, daughter of William the Conqueror. But Adela and her brother Henry had always been tenderly attached to one another, and when the princess despatched her landless younger son to his uncle, the King of England, with prayers for his patronage, Henry at once took him into favour. The young man made friends wherever he went by the affability of his manners, his handsome person, and quick wit and pleasantry, "condescending," says William of Malmesbury, "to chat and joke with persons in the humblest stations as well as with the nobles, who delighted in his company, and attached themselves to his cause from personal regard." Henry I. had, fortunately for his peace of mind, no idea what a viper he was harbouring in his bosom, and that he was greatly conducing to

his nephew's popularity when he helped him to obtain the hand of Matilda, a lady descended from Alfred the Great, and, from her English education and gentle manners, far more likely to please the people at large than his own haughty daughter, who had lived so little in the country, and was termed by the Saxons "that Norman woman."

As a wedding present Henry gave Stephen the palace of Tower Royal, in London, situate between Cheapside and Watling Street, and a fortress of such strength that, in after times, the inhabitants were able to hold out against besiegers when the Tower of London itself had to be abandoned. Here the young couple passed some years, and Stephen, now styled Count of Boulogne in right of his wife, played the part of Absalom in Jerusalem by ingratiating himself with the citizens of London, and Matilda joyfully complied with the wishes of her lord that she should show kindness and charity to all within her reach.

During the residence in Tower Royal, Matilda's first two children were born and died. To their memory she raised the church and hospital of St. Katherine by the Tower, and her mother-love for these lost infants never waxed cold, even when, as Queen of England, she was blessed with another son, Prince Eustace, and a second daughter, Marie de Blois, who took the veil, and became in after years abbess of the royal convent at Romsey.

Stephen and Matilda united in building the Abbey of Furness, of which the extensive ruins still to be seen prove it to have been one of the many stately piles erected in the twelfth century. On either side of the chancel window were placed busts of the founders. That of Matilda has delicate feminine features, with a sweet dignity in which a shade of melancholy is clearly traceable; the dress is simple, and the veil falls from the back of the head. A royal diadem appears on the head of each, though the abbey was completed before Stephen and Matilda ascended the throne. We, having our judgment warped by the impression the monastic abuses of later times have made on our minds, are inclined to think slightly of institutions such as this, as the outcome of mediæval superstition. But we must not forget that besides praying for the souls of the founders and their family, and instructing those who showed ability in the arts and sciences, the duties of the monks extended to the cultivation of the soil, including draining bogs, recovering marshes, making the surrounding country fit for agriculture, and teaching husbandry—works of great importance after the devastations of the early Norman kings, and calculated to win popularity for Stephen in the north.

By a curious fatality, Stephen was very nearly sharing in the calamity of the *Blanche*

Nef: actually went on board, but at the last moment he prudently withdrew from the vessel, remarking "that she was too much crowded with foolish, headstrong, young people." And after the death of Prince William, Stephen was seldom absent from his uncle, and accompanied Henry in all his subsequent journeys to Normandy.

The favourite nephew was with Henry I. at the time of his death, but the breath had scarcely left the royal body when Stephen started in haste for England. He was but following his uncle's example. He called together an assembly of the Anglo-Norman barons in London, and obliged them to transfer their oath of allegiance to him, bringing to aid his claims his friend Hugh Bigod, the steward of Henry's household, who solemnly swore "that the deceased sovereign had disinherited the Empress Maude on his deathbed, and adopted his most dear nephew Stephen for his heir;" and Stephen took possession of Henry's treasury at Winchester, and such was his popularity that no opposition was made to his coronation on St. Stephen's day, 1135. His son Eustace was born shortly after in Normandy, and probably for this reason Matilda was not crowned with her husband.

Stephen's possession of the crown was not disputed by his cousin till after Easter, 1137. At that feast the new King was suddenly attacked with illness, brought on by the great strain, both mental and physical, to which he had subjected himself in meeting the difficulties of his uncertain position. For days he lay in a sort of torpor, so like death that many of the more unstable among his supporters prepared to take up the cause of Maude. Queen Matilda was entirely occupied in ministering to her sick husband, so on his recovery Stephen found Robert, Earl of Gloucester, openly declared in favour of his half-sister, and Geoffrey of Anjou taking active measures in Normandy to assert the claim of his wife and her son Henry. Stephen hastened to Normandy, taking with him his infant son Eustace. By large bribes to Louis VII. of France he obtained his powerful support and his acknowledgment of Eustace as heir to Normandy.

Meanwhile Matilda was left to settle matters in England as best she could. Incendiary fires broke out in several towns; David, King of Scotland, invaded the north under pretence of helping Maude, though Queen Matilda was equally his niece. The Queen proved on this, and several subsequent occasions, that not in vain did the blood of the Crusaders flow in her veins; she repulsed the insurgents at Dover, persuaded the bold mariners of Boulogne, her liege subjects, to sweep the seas in their light craft, so that few could escape by water, and took prompt measures everywhere to quell disturbances. Stephen had every reason to be satisfied with her exertions, while the Church coming to

the aid of its patrons, was mainly instrumental in winning the battle of "the Standard" against the Scotch. It was Matilda who negotiated the peace by which David agreed to retire to his own dominions. To illustrate the manners of the time, and show how slight the ties that bound Stephen's adherents to him, we should mention that when Henry, the heir of Scotland, came to the court at Westminster to do homage to the King of England for his estates in Huntingdon, some of the nobles were so offended because the stranger guest was seated before them at table that they went over to Maude's party.

When next political troubles thrust Matilda into public life, we find her in Normandy negotiating a marriage between Prince Eustace, now about four years old, and Constance, sister of Louis VII. of France. The alliance between the infants was celebrated with great splendour, though, instead of receiving a dowry with the princess, her little husband's relations paid a large sum to Louis for his promise to protect their interests in Normandy.

While Matilda was absent from England the battle of Lincoln placed Stephen in the hands of his enemies, and found Maude at Winchester receiving, under the title of *domina*, or lady of England, the homage of her rival's brother, Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester, and other important persons.

The Queen hastened to London and invoked the aid of the citizens; it was some time before they consented to help her. Finding them under the influence of Henry of Blois, she wrote an able letter to that prelate. According to William of Malmesbury, the following is a part of it:—"The Queen earnestly entreats the whole clergy assembled, and especially the Bishop of Winchester, the brother of her lord the King, to restore her said lord to his kingdom, whom abandoned persons, even such as were under homage to him, have cast into chains." The one idea of the Queen in these trying times was the safety of her husband, which dominated all care for the loss of sovereign state and power. Next Matilda humbled herself before the Empress Maude in pleading for the King, but the proud daughter of Henry I. rejected her petition with scorn and heartless insult. But Maude was not to triumph long. Henry of Blois and others soon became disgusted with the haughty and insolent Empress; Matilda, with her young son Eustace, and aided by William d'Ypres, rallied round her not only the Londoners but the men of Kent and Surrey, drove Maude from Winchester, and took prisoner the Earl of Gloucester. The Queen treated Robert with great courtesy, but would listen to no other terms than his exchange for Stephen, and as either party was practically powerless without its leader, this was shortly effected. Maude remained in England three years more, but in 1147, when Robert of Gloucester died, she withdrew to Normandy for good.

Here ends the public life of Matilda of Boulogne. After a few quiet years she died of a fever at Huningham, in Essex, at the castle of Alberic de Vere, and was buried in Faversham Abbey. The following lines were inscribed on her tomb :—

“The year one thousand one hundred and fifty-one deprived us of Matilda, the happy wife of King Stephen ; it saw her death and her monument. She not only worshipped God, but relieved the poor. Angels held out their hands to receive this Queen, for deep was her humility though great her worth.”



ELEANOR OF AQUELAINE.

Queen of Henry 2nd

ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE.

AQUITAINE was the name given by the Romans to the whole of the south of Gaul, because they found it a sunny, well-watered land, with good ports and navigable rivers. This pleasant-sounding name was retained by that part of the country forming a dukedom of which Bordeaux was the capital, but it might well be employed in its older and wider sense to denote the whole of the rich dominions held in her own right by Eleanor of Aquitaine. These possessions extended from the river Loire to the Pyrenees, from the Bay of Biscay to the Mediterranean, and included the fair domains of Aquitaine, Poitou, Gascony, Guienne, and Biscay, the boundaries of each being somewhat different from those of the modern provinces of like nomenclature. Taken collectively they formed a southern France, distinguished from that part which owned Paris as its centre by a variety of dialect known as "Provençal," which, combining the more graceful forms of the French with the flexible Italian, constituted the language of the troubadours, the medium through which poetical records of the age of chivalry have come down to us.

The beautiful, celebrated Eleanor of Aquitaine was the daughter of William, tenth Duke of Guienne and Count of Poitou, revered as a saint by his subjects because of his early piety and his death in the Holy Land. Her mother, of whom we know little, was Eleanor, or Alienor, of Châtelherault. She was early left to the care of her grandfather, William, the ninth Duke of Aquitaine, the most distinguished of the troubadours, and one of the most elegant scholars of his time. This prince seems to have thought more of the care of his own soul than the welfare of his dominions or the protection of his granddaughter. When about seventy years of age, he made arrangements for his abdication in favour of Eleanor, then only fourteen, and negotiated a marriage for her with Louis le Jeune, heir-apparent to the throne of France.

Bordeaux was the gayest capital in Europe, the seat of elegant refinement, though somewhat licentious luxury, when young Louis, a man of severe manners and serious turn of mind, came with his royal suite to claim his bride. Here the youthful Eleanor already

presided over the Courts of Love, attended by the flower of the chivalry of the south, being herself a skilled musician and no mean poet.

The day after the marriage, the old Duke, turning his back on the pomps of this world, retired to St. James of Compostella, in Spain, where he soon afterwards died. On this day also news was brought to Bordeaux of the death-sickness of the King of France, Louis le Gros; so the young bride and bridegroom set out at once for Paris and assumed the government there, Eleanor making a brilliant and gorgeous entry into the city from St. Denis, which for centuries served as a model state ceremony for future queens.

Endowed with youth, beauty, talents, wealth, and mutual love, the royal couple seemed blessed with every happiness in life. And so for a time they were, but Eleanor used her influence over her husband to the perversion of his better principles, and brought trouble upon him. The Queen had a younger sister, Petronilla, also very beautiful and charming. Encouraged by Eleanor, she employed her fascinations on the Count of Vermandois, who, in order to be free to marry her, divorced his wife, the sister of the Count of Champagne, on some frivolous pretext. The Count of Champagne took up the cause of the slighted lady to compel Vermandois to put away Petronilla and return to his wife, and this he succeeded in doing through the medium of the Pope. But Eleanor was so enraged at his interference that she persuaded Louis VII. to invade his dominions with a large army. Full measure of revenge was taken; devastation swept over the innocent country, and the town of Vitry, with its cathedral, in which thirteen hundred persons had taken refuge, was ruthlessly burnt.

Soon after this occurrence the celebrated St. Bernard preached the second Crusade at Vezelai, in Burgundy. It was the excitement of the day, and amongst the crowds who flocked to hear him came the French king and queen, attended by a splendid train. The saintly preacher made mention of the shocking crime just committed at Vitry, and the serious-minded Louis was struck with remorse, and vowed, by way of atonement, to carry fire and sword against the people of the East, and received the cross on his knees from the hand of St. Bernard. The lively Queen Eleanor appeared as penitent as her husband, and announced her intention of joining the Crusade in person with a party of her ladies, armed and equipped Amazon fashion, who should be called "Queen Eleanor's Guard."

The venerable Suger, the wise counsellor of Louis VI., had tried to dissuade his son from making war on the Count of Champagne, and now exerted himself to the utmost to persuade him to remain at home and take care of his own country. The sagacious minister could foresee something of the evils of this rash undertaking, and felt for the country, heavily taxed to meet its expenses. The King would not listen to him, but proposed that

Suger should take the burden of the government during his absence. The minister accepted the charge only on condition that the Queen should not be left behind. Preparations were made throughout the country; thousands of young nobles took the cross, some from motives of religion or adventure, others to follow their lady-loves. Eleanor and her ladies practised martial exercises and feats of horsemanship in preparation for their coming labours, and shamed many lukewarm knights into joining the throng by sending round as presents the distaffs which they themselves had discarded.

At length, in 1147, the expedition, numbering no less than two hundred thousand, set forth. Following the detachment under Conrad III., Emperor of Germany, the Crusaders marched through Germany, Bohemia, and Hungary to Constantinople, where the Sultan of Turkey, a secret foe, received them with a show of kindness. After crossing the Bosphorus they pressed on towards Antioch, but only a small part of the force was destined to reach that friendly city. It is well known that among Crusaders discipline in the modern sense of the word there was none, each petty prince, attended by his small following, doing exactly as he thought fit; but when women formed a recognised part of the expedition it was "confusion worse confounded." Queen Eleanor and her ladies insisted on carrying with them an immense quantity of unnecessary baggage. To render the long overland march the easier for them, Louis sent forward the Queen and her guard, with instructions to encamp on the high ground commanding the valley of Laodicea, a position which would be favourable in repelling attacks from Arab robbers, who swarmed wherever they were likely to meet with spoil. Louis himself was some five miles behind, protecting the treasure in the rear. The volatile, giddy Eleanor was beginning to weary of the journey, so when she came to the romantic cool valley of Laodicea she insisted on camping there. Great was the King's dismay, when he arrived about midnight, to find the heights all around occupied by the Arabs in swarms. Down they came on their prey. The thoughtless ladies and careless Crusaders were almost helpless against them. Many fell on the spot, and all the precious baggage was lost. Louis, himself in much danger, with great difficulty rescued the Queen and conveyed her to the friendly city of Antioch, luckily not far off, and there the remnants of the expedition gradually assembled.

The ruler of Antioch at this time was Raymond of Poitou, an uncle of the queen, and he received the distressed and crestfallen Crusaders very kindly. To Eleanor he showed so much partiality as to arouse her husband's jealousy. Raymond was still in the prime of life and a very handsome man, and Eleanor, who is said to have "ravished all who saw her by her extreme beauty," was so flattered and amused by his devotion as to behave in a most unbecoming manner. From this time all confidence and happiness between the royal

pair was at an end. Louis left Antioch secretly by night, compelling his unwilling wife to accompany him to Jerusalem. By the time Eleanor entered the Holy City all crusading ardour had melted out of her. She remained there while Louis joined with Conrad in an unsuccessful attack on Damascus; then this disastrous undertaking was concluded, and the King and Queen of France, at the earnest entreaty of Suger, returned home after an absence of about two years.

Louis was so disgusted with the conduct of the Queen whilst at Antioch, her levity with a young emir named Saladdin at Jerusalem, and in general with the bad name which she had made for herself throughout Christendom, that he came home determined on disgracing her and procuring an immediate divorce. But the good Suger succeeded in dissuading him from this step, at least for the present, by representing the political troubles which would at once arise in the land from a separation of north and south, and that if Eleanor's magnificent dower were restored to her it would be greatly detrimental to the interests of their daughter, the Princess Mary.

So the Queen remained in Paris with customary state honours, but all her actions were reported to the King, and she was forbidden to visit her own lands in the south. Eleanor on her part complained of the King's monkish habits, and expressed particular disdain for him when he was persuaded by the priests to cut off his long flowing locks.

After more than a year of mutual discomfort, the French court was visited by Geoffrey Plantagenet, Count of Anjou, who came to do the customary homage for Normandy, and brought with him his son Henry, then about seventeen years of age. The father was a very handsome man, and Eleanor, captivated by his literary accomplishments and pleasant manners, showed him so much attention as to excite public scandal. But whether there was any ground for censure is quite doubtful, and when, eighteen months later, young Henry came to Paris again on a similar errand, the Queen certainly showed him far greater favour than she had bestowed on Geoffrey. Henry Fitz-Empress possessed his father's handsome face and figure and learning, in addition to the charms of youth, and he was, moreover, the recognised heir to the throne of England.

King Louis had previously been anxious to obtain a divorce, now his wife determined to secure one. The plea upon which she sued for it was too near consanguinity with her husband, for she could not bring forward the shadow of a charge of unfaithfulness against him. A council of the Church at Baugenci granted the divorce, Louis, in spite of the advice of Suger, either joining in the petition or making no opposition to it. He was pleased to be quit of Eleanor at any price, and restored her large dowry. We have been taught to think of the French king in righteous horror thrusting from him the wicked woman with

all her lands and money, but it does not appear that Louis lost hold of anything he was able to keep. Eleanor was a sovereign in her own right, and looked upon as such by her own subjects, who would brook no interference by the King of France, except as suzerain through their liege lady.

As Eleanor was parting with Louis, he is said to have remarked that "her conduct made her so infamous that the poorest gentleman in his kingdom would not desire to have her for his wife." But the monkish French king could not have been learned in the ways of the world, for Geoffrey of Anjou, Henry's younger brother, actually laid an ambush at the Port of Piles, on the Loire, with the intention of entrapping the fair and fickle Eleanor on her way to her own dominions, and forcing her to become his bride. But fortune favoured the Queen; she was warned in time, and escaped by another arm of the river to Bordeaux, where she had given rendezvous to her paramour.

Eleanor obtained the divorce in March, 1152, and scarcely six weeks later she was married to Henry Plantagenet. After the ceremony she retired to a quiet part of Normandy, where in May of the same year their son William was born; so no wonder her former husband had quietly acquiesced in the matter of the divorce.

Louis of France was greatly enraged with Henry when he heard that Eleanor was to marry him. He at first proposed to forbid the alliance, which he might do in the character of overlord to the Duke of Normandy, but abandoned the idea, because Henry would certainly have defied him; instead, he took vengeance by influencing Stephen against his heir, and Henry was obliged to leave his fascinating bride and go to England in order to watch over his inheritance. There he resided nearly two years, and during this period he renewed his intimacy with Rosamond Clifford, known to history as "Fair Rosamond," and their eldest child was born. Tradition says that he married her, and the lovely and virtuous young girl certainly believed herself his lawful wife. Henry probably made the acquaintance of this lady during a previous visit to England, when he received knighthood from the hands of King David of Scotland, his uncle, and some kind of betrothal took place between them. It is needless to say that Rosamond was in ignorance of Henry's marriage, and he succeeded in keeping the knowledge of her existence from Eleanor till some time after her arrival in England. But we are anticipating.

Henry returned to the Continent only to be again called to England, this time by the death of Stephen. Eleanor accompanied her husband, with their infant son, and the new king and queen were crowned together at Westminster Abbey, December, 1154. The ceremony was the most splendid of the kind yet witnessed in England. The lady of the South had a natural taste for luxury and magnificence, which her visit to the East had

fostered ; she astonished her new subjects by her Oriental splendour. The coronation robes of the ecclesiastics were now for the first time composed of velvet embroidered with gold. Henry, from his short Angevin cloak, obtained the surname of Curt Mantle, and the form of coronation robe as worn by him is continued to the present time.

The manners of the court of the bright and lively Eleanor formed a great contrast to those of her saintly predecessors, but from a commercial point of view the advent of this richly-dowered queen was an immense advantage to England. Intercourse between this country and southern France gave great stimulus to maritime trade, and the sale of light wines, now first introduced, brought large profits to the merchants of London and other places.

Henry II. ascended the throne as the representative of King Alfred and the Saxon line, so in the following March he had no difficulty in getting the chief barons, at a general meeting of their number, to kiss the hands of little Prince William and his infant brother Henry, acknowledging them his heirs. Only three weeks after this event William died, and was buried beside his great-grandfather, Henry I., in his sumptuous tomb at Reading.

Queen Eleanor does not appear to have been much affected by the death of this child, and we find that she held gay festivities with miracle plays and mysteries, at the three palaces of Westminster, Winchester, and Woodstock.

The mention of Woodstock brings us again to the story of Fair Rosamond. We have mentioned the extensive park attached to the palace there, part of which Henry I. had turned into a zoological gardens. Now there was attached to the garden, as usual with all pleasure-grounds of the Middle Ages, a labyrinth or maze. Brompton tells the following story : "That one day Queen Eleanor saw the King walking in the pleasance of Woodstock, with the end of a ball of floss silk attached to his spur. Coming near him unperceived, she took up the ball, and, the King walking on, the silk unwound, and thus the Queen traced him to a thicket in the labyrinth of the park, where he disappeared. She kept the matter secret, often revolving in her own mind in what company he could meet with balls of silk. Soon after the king left Woodstock for a distant journey ; then Queen Eleanor, bearing her discovery in mind, searched the thicket in the park, and discovered a low door cunningly concealed. This door she had forced, and found it was the entrance to a winding subterranean path which led out at a distance to a sylvan lodge in the most retired part of the adjacent forest." In this bower the Queen found a very beautiful lady, bending over an embroidery frame. Imagine the surprise of each ! Eleanor, the acknowledged wife and queen, herself the profligate nursling of a licentious court, does not merit much of our sympathy, but the pure-minded pious daughter of an honourable family excites

our deepest pity in the first shock caused by the discovery of her humiliating position. History gives no authentic details of the interview between the rivals, but the rage of the one and the pitiful shame of the other is easy to picture. The story runs that Eleanor either stabbed Rosamond to the heart or compelled her to drain "a cup of poison strong;" but, whatever she may have threatened in the madness of sudden anger, she did neither the one nor the other. Rosamond at once retired to a nunnery at Godstow, where she lived twenty years in the deepest penitence, greatly beloved for her gentleness and kindness by the nuns, who after her death venerated her almost as a saint. Henry appears not to have troubled himself further on her account, but he caused her two sons to be brought up with his other children, and showed to them more of the affection of a parent than he did to the sons of Eleanor. As an argument in the Queen's defence against the charge of poisoning, it must be stated that at the time of Rosamond's death the profligate Henry was scandalising his court by his seduction of the Princess Alice of France, the affianced wife of his son Richard; so it is most improbable that Eleanor would be taking vengeance on the forgotten mistress in the obscurity of her convent when a royal lady was occupying the attention of the unfaithful husband.

In the year 1159 Eleanor gave birth to her eldest daughter, Matilda, afterwards married to the Lion of Saxony, and the following year to Richard, the celebrated Cœur de Lion. About this time Eleanor was first employed as regent of Normandy, and we shall see that the talented lady, now past the age when frivolous amusements and desire to attract admiration would form the dominant passions of a beautiful but unprincipled woman, exhibited much administrative ability.

The autumn of 1152 was marked by the second coronation of Henry II. and Eleanor, which took place at Worcester, though a reason for the repetition of the ceremony is not clearly given in history. Soon afterwards a fourth son was born, and named Geoffrey Plantagenet, after his grandfather. Henry betrothed the infant prince to Constance of Bretagne, then about two years old. The ambitious king, in his thirst for territory, had most unjustly seized Bretagne by way of conquest, and by arranging this marriage he sought to conciliate the offended Bretons.

Not satisfied with Bretagne, Henry renewed his wife's claim to Thoulouse, and prepared to invade the earldom with a large force, but the King of France was beforehand with him, and, when he reached the province, Henry found a French army assisting Earl Raymond, and he was obliged to abandon his project after a useless siege. During this year Eleanor acted as regent in England, and her capacity for affairs seems to have satisfied even Henry, noted as a wise and prudent ruler.

Each of the children of Eleanor and Henry was contracted in marriage while still in infancy. This custom, so prevalent in feudal times, often led to disputes and wars, and these alliances are somewhat difficult to follow, as so many years must necessarily elapse between the history of their arrangement and fulfilment. In 1160 Eleanor was again in Normandy, with Prince Henry and her daughter, to be present at a marriage that had been previously talked of between Henry, the heir of England, and Marguerite, daughter of the Queen's former husband, Louis VII., and his second wife, Alice of Champagne. How any of the parents can have even thought of a union between the families is most astonishing, unless we consider that in those days matters of state policy were universally considered before the private happiness of the individuals concerned. Also we must remember that France was in a transition state; the smaller principalities were fast losing their independence, and during the reign of Henry II. and succeeding English sovereigns the question at issue was whether these small territories should be absorbed by England or by the kingdom of France. At the time to which we have now come the French king was frequently obliged to make concessions to England. Thus the young Princess Marguerite was delivered into the hands of Henry to be educated in England. The King placed both the children under the care of Chancellor à Becket, then high in the royal favour. A better preceptor could not have been chosen, and so well did this wonderfully versatile man discharge his duty towards them that he secured the affection of both the prince and princess to his dying day.

Again, two years afterwards, another marriage was made in the same families. Some dispute arose between the kings concerning the dowry of the French princess, and the matter was compromised by the formation of a marriage contract between Alice of France and Richard Cœur de Lion, aged respectively three and four years. This little wife was also educated in England.

The eldest daughter of Queen Eleanor by the King of France was married to the Count of Champagne, and her second daughter, three years later, to the Count of Blois, who was made by Louis High Seneschal of France, an office which Henry of England claimed as his right as Count of Anjou, and which, being given to another, he made into a cause of quarrel. The aged Empress Maude, Henry's mother, by order of the Pope, came forward as mediator between the parties. In 1166 John, Eleanor's youngest son, was born at Woodstock, and the same year the Queen was again acting as regent in Normandy, when that province revolted against her. It is curious that while the Normans were offended with her, her own subjects revolted because the presence of their lawful sovereign was so long withheld. Henry, met by discontent on all sides, was obliged to accede to their

demands, and Eleanor, with her son Richard, took up her residence in Bordeaux, and remained there till the year 1172.

And now a word should be said about Chancellor à Becket, whose contest with the King on Church matters forms a prominent feature in every account of the reign of Henry II. Thomas à Becket was not, as is sometimes averred, a man of very mean birth, but his disadvantage in life was Anglo-Saxon lineage and education. His father, Gilbert à Becket, had accompanied Edgar Atheling to the Holy Land on the first Crusade, and returned to this country with the Saxon prince. There is a romantic but well-authenticated story that a Syrian lady, the daughter of an emir, followed the knight all the way to England, and with the name of her lover, "Gilbert," and his city, "London," the only two words of the language she could utter, found à Becket and was married to him. Their son Thomas early showed talent for learning, and he became a Church lawyer; he obtained the patronage of Henry II. and then his friendship. À Becket was not only clever in book-learning, but a man of fine presence and fascinating manners; he was quickly advanced to the post of Chancellor, and when the Archbishopric of Canterbury fell vacant Henry urged him to accept the post. That he was not even in priests' orders was, in those times, a difficulty soon overcome; but à Becket took the office most reluctantly, foretelling the ruin of his friendship with his royal master as a consequence.

From the day of his installation à Becket espoused the cause of the clergy. To supply money for his foreign wars Henry frequently made sequestrations of Church property, and reduced large numbers of the lesser clergy to poverty. In this reign there was no pious queen to watch over the interests and alleviate the sufferings of the poorer classes. The pleasure-loving Eleanor, with her interests abroad, had no thought for such matters. She did not stand as mediator between Church and State, as did Matilda in the time of Anselm and Henry I., yet the matter in dispute was substantially the same now as then. The feud lasted seven years; Henry, who in his younger days is described as a pleasant, energetic man, had become soured by many worries. Like his grandfather, in his later years he gave way to fits of violent anger; in one of these his attendants heard him desire to be rid of the troublesome prelate, and four knights, thinking to do their master a pleasure, hastened to Canterbury and murdered à Becket there in the church, on the last day of the year 1171. Henry afterwards walked barefoot through Canterbury, and was scourged at the shrine of the saint, performing this penance, either from real contrition, or to atone to the people for the death of their favourite.

Mention has been made of the affection which existed between à Becket and his royal pupils. During the struggle of the King and Archbishop, young Henry very much

favoured the views of the latter. To make the interests of the Prince incline to his own side, the King took the measure, unprecedented in England, of associating his heir with him on the throne during his lifetime. Preparations were made for his coronation, with his young wife; but when the French princess learned that her beloved à Becket was not to perform the ceremony she refused to take part in it either. Henry was very angry with her, and her father, Louis, declaring that his daughter was insulted, made this a fresh pretext for quarrel.

From the day of his marriage with Eleanor, Henry had posted faithful Normans, empowered to take part in the government, in all the towns of Southern France. This measure was, of course, unpopular with the people, and we find that Eleanor, as her sons grew up, tried to forward their interests in opposition to those of her husband. In accordance with the custom of the provinces, Richard had been crowned Count of Poitou and Geoffrey Duke of Guienne. But Henry, although willing to acknowledge the princes as heirs to these domains, had no intention of letting the government pass out of his own hands while he was alive. Eleanor, on the other hand, encouraged her sons to claim immediate possession, with homage, if to any suzerain at all, to the King of France alone. Reports also came from England at this time of the King's disgraceful conduct with the Princess Alice, so Richard had an extra cause of complaint against his father, and incited by their mother, both Princes rose in open rebellion. It was just after the murder of à Becket that Henry was summoned to the Continent to quell these revolts. He took with him his son Henry, but the heir cannot have been on very good terms with his father, for no sooner had they landed in Normandy than he fled to the Court of France, where he was soon joined by his brothers, Richard and Geoffrey, also as refugees. Nor had the Queen any greater inclination to meet her angered husband; she made an attempt to escape in man's attire from Bordeaux, but was followed by some Normans and brought back to await the King's arrival. What Henry found out when he inquired into state affairs at Bordeaux is uncertain, but from this time he kept his wife a close prisoner. At the end of the year he returned to England leading captive, with the Queen, the refractory Princess Marguerite. Eleanor was confined in the palace at Winchester, in custody of Randolph de Glanville, keeper of the treasure; and here, with one short interval, she remained for sixteen years.

But the captivity of the Queen did not lessen the family quarrels. Henry continued to show a most unwise partiality for his eldest and youngest sons, Henry and John, just as Eleanor had always favoured Richard and Geoffrey. The family feud was augmented by the troubadours of Aquitaine, who, resenting the captivity of their beloved Princess,

incited her favourite sons to open rebellion by war songs and laments such as the following:—"Daughter of Aquitania, fair fruitful vine! thou hast been torn from thy country, and led into a strange land. Brought up in delicacy and abundance, thou enjoyedst a royal liberty, living in the bosom of wealth, delighting thyself with the sports of thy women, with their songs, to the sound of the lute and tabor; and now thou mournest, thou weapest, thou consumest thyself with sorrow. Return, poor prisoner, return to thy cities, if thou canst." Or, "Woe to the traitors which are in Aquitaine, for the day of their chastisement is at hand!"

For two years insurrection and civil war reigned in Southern France, for the Norman and Angevin subjects of Henry were no less attached to him than the people of Aquitaine and Guienne were to his queen.

In the year 1183, while in arms against his father for a larger share in the government, young Henry became suddenly ill at the castle of Martel, in Guienne. In passionate remorse for his undutiful conduct to so indulgent a father, he sent to entreat forgiveness, and lived long enough to receive from the King a ring as an assurance of affection. He caused himself to be lifted from his bed and placed on sackcloth and ashes, that he might by thus dying show the sincerity of his penitence.

This sad event for a time reconciled husband and wife. Eleanor was released from her captivity, and during the time her daughter Matilda and her husband, the Lion of Saxony, sought refuge in England, a period of at least a year, she occupied her proper position at court.

After the death of young Henry, Richard, Duke of Guienne, now heir-apparent, again took up arms against his father; and he had some just cause of resentment. Alice, his affianced wife, now twenty-three years of age, was still withheld from him, while at the same time he remained bound to her, so that he could not offer his hand to any other bride. Richard was devotedly fond of his mother, and she as passionately attached to him, so he was doubly indignant when rumours began to be circulated that the King would marry Alice if he could in any way rid himself of Eleanor. But Henry was not quite base enough to commit the crime of murder, nor would he, on the other hand, surrender the Princess, so the years dragged on in discomfort and unhappiness for all concerned. Richard at one time got possession of all Aquitaine, and Henry, not able to subdue him by force of arms, brought Eleanor over from England as far as Normandy, and then demanded that the rebellious son should relinquish to her all his authority. Richard joyfully came forward to meet her, and willingly surrendered everything into her hands. This was about the year 1186, and Eleanor remained some months as ruler at Bordeaux, but when

Richard made peace with his father she returned to England, and soon after we hear of her as again imprisoned.

Thus much of Prince Richard. As to Eleanor's other favourite son, Geoffrey, who had been educated among his mother's people, and enjoyed the dukedom of Brittany, he was the source of as much disturbance as his elder brother, for when not in revolt against his father he quarrelled with Richard. He was attending a great tournament at Paris, when in the *mêlée* he was thrown from his horse and trampled to death. Thus the Queen in her captivity had to mourn the loss of two sons, both of fine manly appearance and good abilities, struck down in the very flower of youth. That Eleanor felt their loss deeply is proved by the following extract from a letter she wrote to the Pope in after years relative to the captivity in Germany of Richard Cœur de Lion:—"The younger King (Henry) and the Count of Bretagne both sleep in the dust, while their most wretched mother is still compelled to live on, tormented by irremediable recollections of the dead."

Scarcely was Geoffrey in his grave than a fresh circumstance added indignation to Eleanor's grief. "Great scandal arose regarding the Duchess Constance and her brother-in-law John. He was constantly 'haunting her,' and on this account it is supposed Henry, after the birth of her posthumous son Arthur, forced the duchess to marry the Earl of Chester, as Prince John's attentions to his sister-in-law caused considerable comment." This Arthur is the unfortunate prince who, as son of Geoffrey, in after years stood between his uncle John and the crown of England, but during his mother's lifetime John refrained from laying violent hands on the boy.

Henry II. died in 1189, worn out with parental anxieties. He was on his way to meet Richard at Vazelai, when at Chinon he expired in one of those paroxysms of rage to which in later years he was subject. His last moments were embittered by the news that his favourite and much-indulged son, John, had taken up arms against him. Of his many children only Geoffrey, the youngest son of Rosamond Clifford, attended Henry's deathbed. Henry, who had always loved him well, promised him the archbishopric of York; and this Geoffrey seems to have enjoyed the esteem of the royal family, for, some time afterwards, Eleanor visited the Pope in order to obtain his consent to the appointment.

As soon as Richard heard of his father's death he hastened to Fontevraud, where, according to Henry's dying wishes, his body had been conveyed. Here the rebel son, who inherited a large share of his mother's affectionate, impulsive nature, in unavailing grief was slowly approaching the bier, when blood burst from the mouth and nostrils of the dead King. The superstition of the time interpreted this circumstance as a sign that the corpse recognised the approach of its murderer, and the impressionable Richard, overcome by the

sight, prostrated himself at the altar in loud lamentation and prayer to God for that forgiveness which he believed his father withheld from him.

As soon as possible after the King's death, Eleanor was released from her prison at Winchester and, by order of her son, restored to all regal state. At his coronation he forbade the presence of any women, because his mother, on account of the seclusion demanded by her mourning, could not take part in it.

Randolph de Glanville, the Queen's custodian at Winchester, was at first disgraced, but when King Richard, on his mother's entreaty, gave him audience, he delivered a large sum belonging to the royal treasury into his hand, and further showed him the secret treasure vaults under the palace, to which he alone possessed the secret of access. By this faithful act Glanville earned not only his liberty, but the confidence of the new King, and Eleanor also treated him with favour, either from gratitude for the courtesy with which he had discharged his unpleasant duty as her custodian, or from personal friendship. Indeed, the only person on whom the Queen took any vengeance for her wrongs was Alice of France. This Princess she imprisoned in the palace at Winchester, where Eleanor had herself passed so many dreary years.

One of the first acts of Richard I. was to make his mother's dowry equal in value to those enjoyed by Matilda of Scotland and Matilda of Boulogne, and then to constitute her regent of England in his absence. The words of the chronicler are: "Queen Eleanor, directly she was liberated from her restraint at Winchester, was invested with full powers as regent, which she most beneficially exercised, going in person from city to city, setting free all those confined under the Norman game laws, which in the latter part of Henry's life were cruelly enforced. When she released prisoners it was on condition that they prayed for the soul of her late husband."

Richard now made all speed to carry out a long-cherished scheme of winning honour and renown in the Holy Land. Eleanor at this time visited Aquitaine, and from there she went on a pleasant mission to the Court of Navarre in the interest of her beloved son. It was to claim the hand of Berengaria, a princess to whom Richard had been long attached, and she conducted the bride-elect as far as Messina, where Richard and his train met them by appointment. Here Richard adjusted the affairs of his favourite sister Joanna, Queen of Sicily. Eleanor had not seen this daughter for many years, but though she loved her dearly she only allowed herself four days' stay in Sicily, and pressed on to Rome, that she might the sooner obtain the consent of the Pope to the appointment of Geoffrey Clifford as Archbishop of York. Eleanor spent the greater part of Richard's reign in England; appointing her grandson, Otho of Saxony, ruler in Aquitaine, she

“governed England with great wisdom and popularity.” When news came of the captivity of the King, and John laid claim to the kingdom, she wrote to the Pope, styling herself “Eleanor, by the wrath of God, Queen of England,” and eloquently entreated the Head of the Church to come to her aid. “King Richard,” she wrote, “is held in fetters while John, brother of the captive, depopulates with sword and wastes with fire. The Lord is against me in everything, therefore do my sons fight against each other. Thou hast power to release my son; wherefore dost thou so cruelly delay it?” Finding her prayers unavailing, the Queen sacrificed much of her private property, and taxed her own Aquitaine, as well as England, to the utmost to raise Richard’s ransom; and though more than seventy-five years of age, she travelled to Mayence in person, paid the money, and received her son from the custody of the Bishop of Cologne, in the presence of the Emperor and all his assembled nobles. “The King being thus liberated,” says the chronicler, “all the bystanders wept for joy.”

Again in England, Eleanor induced the traitor John to humble himself and seek pardon of his generous brother. Richard gave him his hand in token of pardon, saying sorrowfully: “I would that I might as soon forget thy offence as thou wilt forget my forgiveness.”

The aged queen was destined to outlive her favourite Richard. His almost sudden death was quickly followed by that of her daughter Joanna. The bodies of both were laid close to the remains of their father at Fontevraud. Eleanor was buried in the same place, but before her call to rest she was again the unhappy witness of family strife. John, now King of England, was at war with his nephew Arthur when, in 1124, she closed her long and eventful life.

A retrospect of the long life of this remarkable princess inclines us to judge her leniently. When we take into account her corrupt education and its attendant temptations, her repentance during the sad years of her captivity, her strong love for her children, the many sorrows of her middle and later life, and the wisdom and mercy with which she used her talent for government, we cannot but hope that she received her punishment during her lifetime and made full atonement for the follies and crimes of her youth.



BERENGARIA.

Consort of Richard 1st.

V.

BERENGARIA OF NAVARRE.

BERENGARIA, Princess of Navarre, a little kingdom on the borders of France and Spain, was the eldest daughter of Sancho the Wise, and a descendant of that Sancho III. who held the kingdoms of Aragon and Navarre in his own right, and by marriage had acquired the sovereignty of Castile also, so that he aspired to the title of Emperor of Spain, and was called by his subjects Sancho the Great. But the empire crumbled as soon as it was formed. At the death of this monarch his dominions were divided among his four children; the father of Berengaria, a grandson of one of them, had married Beatrice, daughter of Alphonso, King of Castile, and so become a powerful ruler.

It is said that Richard, when Count of Poitou, first saw Berengaria and was captivated by her beauty at a tournament held by her father at Pampeluna, his capital, where the young princess was born and educated. Her brother, Sancho the Strong, celebrated in troubadour poetry for his prowess in battle against the Moors, was an intimate friend of Richard; the two young men were *fratres jurati*, or sworn brothers, according to a custom of the times of chivalry. Sancho the Strong and his sister, though Spanish by birth, both spoke the same language as Richard Plantagenet, and were skilled in all the learning and poetry of the Provençals, of whom Richard, by his position in Aquitaine and Guienne, was the patron and judge. So, as the courts of Navarre and Guienne were situated within easy distance of one another, it is no wonder that Richard spent much time in the company of the brother and became enamoured of the sister. The lovers were secretly engaged for some years before Richard succeeded to the throne of England; but marriage was impossible while the contract made by their parents between Richard and Alice of France remained intact. Hence the Prince's frequent and persistent demands that either his wife should be granted him or his liberty. For Richard was too true a Plantagenet not to set his passion for power above the love of any woman. He would have married Alice when by so doing he could secure the friendship and support of her brother, Philip of

France, which, as simple Duke of Guienne or Aquitaine, was of the last importance to him ; but no sooner did he find himself King of England, than he felt his power to defy the French king and select a bride according to his personal inclinations.

Thus all the bustle of preparation for a crusade did not deter Richard from securing the hand of Berengaria with all possible speed. As has been already stated, the dowager-queen Eleanor was intrusted with the delicate mission. Sancho VI. gladly acceded to her proposition, and into her custody surrendered his willing daughter. They commenced their journey not to England, but to Naples ; for by this time Richard and Philip, each with a mighty following, had assembled their forces on the broad plains of Vazelai, on the borders of Burgundy, the very spot where St. Bernard, just a generation before, had by his eloquent preaching stirred Christendom to go forth on a similar expedition. Here the two kings solemnly swore mutual good faith, and to hold each other's dominions sacred during their absence. They agreed that Richard's division should march to Marseilles and thence take ship, calling at Naples to receive his bride, while Philip took the road to Genoa and thence embarked. So the kings parted, intending to meet again before Acre, in Palestine ; but the elements ruled differently. Contrary winds and tempests drove both to seek shelter in the harbour of Messina.

Richard had family business to transact in Sicily. His beautiful sister, Joanna, had been married to the aged William, the good King of Sicily, who was very fond of her, and at his death left her immense riches in his will. As she had no children, the crown was seized by Tancred, an Italian prince, the ruler of Naples. But Tancred, not satisfied with the throne, appropriated Joanna's wealth, and, according to some, threw her into prison. But at the approach of the renowned Cœur de Lion and his powerful army, he hastened to restore Joanna her rights, and when Philip of France arrived, the wily Tancred, to distract Richard's attention from his own conduct, secretly sought to bring about a quarrel between the crusading kings.

Philip at first insisted that Richard should fulfil the contract with his sister, and the English king flatly refused to do so. When pressed for his reason, he stated openly that the lady's reputation was not so unsullied as it ought to have been. This charge Philip was unable to refute, and as Richard at the same time made over to him the rich city of Gisors, which he held as part of the unfortunate Alice's dowry, Philip allowed the matter to drop, and even sanctioned the union of Richard and Berengaria.

At this time Berengaria was staying at Brindisi with Queen Eleanor, as etiquette forbade that she should approach her royal lover until he was released from his engagement to Alice. By the time that difficulty was disposed of the season of Lent had

arrived, and the marriage could not take place till after Easter. But the crusading forces could be no longer delayed, so arrangements were made for Berengaria to accompany her lover in a separate vessel and in the companionship of Richard's sister Joanna. Richard himself sailed in his favourite galley, the "Treuc-the-Mer" (literally, *Cut-the-sea*), and placed Berengaria and his sister in another of his best ships, under the care of a valiant noble called Stephen de Turnham. Of course the "Treuc-the-Mer" headed the navy. She carried an immense lantern to serve as a guide to the other ships during the night, but it was of little use. A violent storm came on and scattered the vessels; Richard found shelter in a harbour of Crete, while the galley bearing the royal ladies was driven towards Cyprus. In the words of the chronicler, "Queen Joanna's galley sheltered in the harbour of Limoussa, when Isaac, the lord of Cyprus, sent two boats and demanded if the Queen would land. She declined the offer, saying, 'All she wanted to know was whether the King of England had passed.' They answered, 'They did not know.' Isaac then approached with a great power; upon which the chevaliers who guarded the royal ladies got the galley in order, to be rowed out of the harbour at the first indication of hostility. Meanwhile Isaac, who saw Berengaria on board, demanded, 'What damsel that was with them?' They declared, 'She is the sister of the King of Navarre, whom the King of England's mother had brought for him to espouse.' Isaac seemed so angry at this intelligence, that Stephen de Turnham gave signal to heave up the anchor, and the Queen's galley rowed with all speed into the offing."

When the tempest was somewhat abated, Richard, assembling his fleet, found that besides two ships wrecked on the Cyprus coast, that containing his bride was missing. His anxiety was turned to rage when he at last found it tossing in the open sea, within sight of the inhospitable harbour of Limoussa. Bursting with indignation, without a moment's delay, he made for the shore. Landing, he found Isaac and his men engaged in plundering the wrecked vessels, a doubly shameful proceeding because the distressed mariners were soldiers of the Cross. However, like a true knight, Richard first sent a civil message to demand explanation. Isaac returned the insolent reply "That whatever goods the sea threw on his island he should take, without asking leave of anyone." Then Cœur de Lion led the attack with a right good will, and so successfully that Isaac and his followers were glad to seek refuge in Limoussa; but Richard expelled them from the town the very next day, and joyfully received the frightened ladies on land. How delighted poor Berengaria must have been to leave the narrow ship and find herself once more on *terra firma*, by the side of her brave defender. It was soon settled that the wedding should be no longer postponed, so the ceremony was performed in the merry

month of May, in the year 1191, amidst great feasting and revelry, the more appreciated in contrast with their late labours and perils, by all who took part in it. The marriage was followed by the coronation, and as the people of Cyprus were heartily tired of the tyrannical rule of Isaac, they willingly consented that Bishop Bernard, of Bayonne, should crown Richard King of Cyprus, and Berengaria Queen of Cyprus and England.

It is probably on account of this double sovereignty that the crown of this queen is so much more elaborate than that worn by her predecessors; besides several bands of gems, the foliage of the *fleur-de-lis*, with which it is ornamented, is so arranged as to look like a crown within a crown.

The defeated Isaac fell into the hands of Richard, who bound him in strong silver chains, richly gilt, and sent him to the Queen as her captive. Before the crusading party left the island, the beautiful daughter and heiress of Isaac came to Richard and implored his mercy and protection. The King received her graciously and "sent her directly to his queen, from whom she never parted till after their return to Europe." Our quotation is from the record made by a contemporary, and there is every reason to disbelieve the gossiping tale that Richard was captivated by the charms of the unfortunate lady and for her sake deserted his newly made bride. It is far more probable that her relations were indignant with Richard for seizing her inheritance; indeed, it is well known that when, later, Richard at Acre offered his famous insult to Leopold, Archduke of Austria, by pulling down his banner from the walls, the real subject of dispute was this Cypriot princess, to whom Leopold was uncle.

Of the naval battle which Richard won against the Saracens on his voyage to Acre we must not pause to tell, nor of the details of the siege of that city in which the English king took a prominent part, gaining for himself the fear of the followers of Saladin and the jealousy of his Christian allies.

After Acre was taken by the Christians, Berengaria, Joanna of Naples, and the Princess of Cyprus, were placed for safety within its walls, under the guardianship of Stephen de Munchenis and Bertrand de Verdun, occupying a palace there, the ruins of which are still pointed out as King Richard's. Here the royal ladies remained during the whole of the Syrian campaign, living in almost harem-like seclusion. In Palestine Richard secured the honour and renown he sought, but any permanent advantage which he might have gained over the Infidels was rendered impossible by the jealousy of the other Christian princes. He did not even enter Jerusalem. At one time hearing that its garrison had gone to the assistance of Damascus, the English forces, supported by those of Hugh of Burgundy, hastened forward. Richard, as might be expected from so bold a

warrior, led the way, but when not far from the holy city he learned that the division under the Duke of Burgundy, out of pure envy, had turned back, that it might not be said that the King of England had been the first to enter Jerusalem. Just as he received this news a knight rode up to Richard, saying, "Sire, sire! only come hither, and I will show you Jerusalem." But the King, throwing down his weapons, cried, with tears in his eyes and hands uplifted to heaven, "Ah, Lord God! I pray thee that I may never see thy holy city Jerusalem, since I cannot deliver it from the hands of mine enemies."

Having arranged his celebrated truce with Saladin, in 1192, Richard started on his return to Europe. At this time an estrangement arose between Berengaria and her husband. Some say that the Princess of Cyprus was the cause of it, but that seems improbable, as the King planned for her to continue in the company of the Queen and Joanna on the homeward voyage, and saw them embark for Naples. They arrived at that port in due course; but Richard, who was to return by another route and travel *incognito* through Europe, was not so fortunate. His ship was wrecked on the coast of Istria. The other crusading kings had preceded Richard, and it may have been from a desire to discover by personal observation the state of affairs in Europe, or to enter his own kingdom unannounced, and thus prove how far true the reputed intrigues against him of his brother John really were. At any rate, the scheme offered the attraction of novelty and the probability of encountering some adventures more congenial to the tastes of the spirited soldier-prince than a tedious journey made under the restraints of kingly state as escort to a wife and sister.

The story of Richard's wanderings in disguise in the territory of Leopold of Austria, his capture near Vienna and secret imprisonment by his enemy, together with his discovery by the page Blondel, and the collection and payment of his ransom and final release, is too well known to need repetition in detail. We have said that the fair Berengaria and her companions reached Naples in safety. At Rome the ladies were detained six months, unable to continue their journey for fear of the Emperor. Berengaria, by continuous and urgent solicitations to the Pope, induced him to grant her an escort to Marseilles by way of Pisa and Genoa. There the King of Aragon kindly welcomed her, and gave her safe guard through his own dominions, and appointed Raimond de St. Gilles to protect the royal ladies till they reached Poitou, their final destination. This Raimond was son of the Count of Thoulouse, with whom Queen Eleanor had been engaged in a lifelong dispute as to certain rights which both claimed. Young St. Gilles was travelling from Rome with a strong escort, and he performed the part of guardian to the distressed ladies so well and pleasantly as to win the affections of the Queen of Sicily. The lovers were married as

soon as they reached Poitou, and when Eleanor heard of it she transferred her claims to her daughter, and so healed the breach which had so long existed between the House of Aquitaine and the Counts of Thoulouse.

The gentle Berengaria was greatly pleased at the happiness of Joanna, for a very tender friendship, which lasted till death, had sprung up between the two, fostered by close intercourse during their perilous journeys and long sojourn abroad. Thus the neglected, childless wife found solace in the affection of her beloved husband's sister. That she did love Richard with a constancy which he far from deserved is undoubted, and this forms a pleasing trait in a character in other respects decidedly weak. Without any self-reliance, the poor Queen only lamented her husband's captivity, while she might have been bringing his wrongs before the whole of Europe, and thus gained the sympathy and support of at least some of its princes. But no, it was the aged but energetic queen-mother who toiled and schemed till she had collected the required ransom.

After four years' absence Richard was re-crowned at Westminster, but his queen did not share the honours. Indeed, for some time after his return he lived apart from his wife, frequenting the company of a profligate and worthless set of persons with whom he had been associated in his bachelor days.

About a year after his release Richard was stricken in Normandy with a sickness which he believed to be mortal, so he hastily sent for all the monks resident within ten miles of the place, and before them made a public confession of his sins and promised amendment.

His good resolutions were strengthened shortly after, when the celebrated St. Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, paid him a visit. Richard had had a quarrel with this prelate relative to a fine he demanded from the revenues of the see, which really amounted to a payment to the King by the Bishop for the favour of the appointment. St. Hugh had resisted the claim as a robbery of the poor, and he was warned by his friends of the danger of approaching the fierce soldier; but the holy man, brave in the cause of right, persisted in going to Normandy; he entered the chapel where Richard was at mass, and the following dialogue ensued: "Give me the embrace of peace, my son," said the Bishop. "That you have not deserved," answered Richard. "Indeed I have," said St. Hugh, "for I have made a long journey on purpose to see my son." With that he plucked the King by the sleeve, and took him aside. The good-natured Richard, touched by the old man's gentleness and his benevolent expression of countenance, yielded to his influence, and not only embraced him, but listened patiently to his admonition. "In what state is your conscience?" asked St. Hugh. "Very easy," replied Richard. "How can that be, my son, when you live apart from your virtuous queen, and are faithless to her? when you devour the provision

of the poor, and load your people with heavy exactions? Are these light transgressions, my son?" The King admitted his faults, and promised to do better in the future. Indeed, so pleased was he with the reverend Bishop, that he told his companions afterwards that, "Were all our prelates like Hugh of Lincoln, both king and barons must submit to their righteous rebukes."

A few months later Richard went to Poitiers, where he became reconciled to Berengaria, who welcomed her lord with joyful forgiveness, wisely abstaining from offering him any reproaches for his past unkind and neglectful conduct. They spent Christmas together in right royal fashion, and under the influence of his gentle wife the King gave all the money he had in hand in alms to the poor of the neighbourhood, who were suffering at the time from severe famine, owing to the failure of their crops.

In the "*Polychronicon*" we find the following entry against this date:—"The King took home to him his Queen Berengaria, whose society he had for a long time neglected, though she were a royal, eloquent, and beauteous lady, and for his love had ventured with him through the world."

Richard sealed this reconciliation by appointing to the Queen the crown revenues arising from the mines in Devonshire and Cornwall, of which the value was about two thousand marks a year. She already possessed as her continental dower the city of Maus and the county of Bigorre. Henceforward Berengaria never left her husband, accompanying him even on his campaigns. But the Queen's renewed happiness was destined to last but three short years. It would have been most marvellous if so rash and reckless a knight as King Richard had died naturally in his bed, but with all his fierce and ungovernable passions there is something so manly in his faults and so lovable in his impulsive generosity, that it is sad to note that death overtook him while still in his full manly strength, and resulted from his own cupidity. Report was brought to the King that a labourer had discovered on the estate of Vidomar, lord of Chaluz in Aquitaine, a trap-door which led to a cave filled with statues of gold and vases full of diamonds, which Vidomar had removed for safety into his town of Chaluz. Richard sent to Vidomar demanding, as suzerain, his share of the "treasure trove," which the lord refused for the very good reason that the whole tale was a fabrication. But Richard, who was doubtless familiar with all the tales of Eastern marvels so well known to us in "*The Arabian Nights*," would not believe the denial, so he laid siege to the town. An arrow pierced the King's shoulder; the wound was slight, but the surgeon who removed it performed his work in a very clumsy fashion; mortification set in, and Richard died, not, however, till he had pardoned the soldier who shot the fatal shaft. Berengaria was present at the King's death,

and afterwards gave witness that he left the kingdom of England and two-thirds of his wealth to his brother John.

No sooner had Berengaria emerged from the chamber of death than she received news of the serious illness of her dear friend Joanna, under very painful circumstances. The Count of Thoulouse was suffering persecution at the hands of his own barons, instigated by the clergy, on account of his unorthodox religious convictions. His wife, though unfit for the exertion, had besieged the castle of Cassen, "but owing to the treachery of her attendants her camp was fired; she escaped with difficulty from the burning tents, much scorched and hurt. Unsubdued by this accident, she hastened to lay her wrongs before her beloved brother Richard. She learnt as she arrived he had just expired; the pains of premature childbirth seized her as she heard the dire intelligence, and she sank under the double affliction of mental and corporal agony. With her last breath she begged to be laid near her brother Richard.

So, under Berengaria's direction, the mortal remains of the brother and sister were placed with pious care side by side in one vault in Fontevraud Abbey; and scarcely were the funeral rites completed than the sorrowing Queen heard of the death of her only sister, Blanche.

Thus was this unfortunate lady deprived, within a few weeks, of all who were dear to her in this world. She resolved, therefore, to retire from it, and, taking up her residence in her own city of Mans, she founded the abbey of L'Espan there. The magnificent building was completed in the year 1230, and from that time she certainly lived entirely within its walls, though the exact date at which her long and blameless life came to a close is uncertain.

Whilst this costly abbey was in process of erection, Berengaria frequently had occasion to remonstrate with the kings of England, first with John and afterwards with the regency of Henry III., because her dowry was not paid with any regularity. The Pope was again her champion; he wrote to England "setting forth the wrongs and wants of his dear daughter in Christ, Berengaria," and in the sentence of excommunication pronounced against John there was a clause referring to his non-payment of Berengaria's dowry. She was buried in her own abbey, where her tomb still remains, bearing a fine effigy in high relief.

Though crowned Queen of England, the lady of Navarre never set foot in this country; but as consort to one of our favourite kings, we may feel pride in her virtues and sympathise with her sorrows. It has been said with truth: "From early youth to her grave, Berengaria manifested devoted love for Richard; uncomplaining when deserted by him, forgiving when he returned, and faithful to his memory even unto death."



ISABELLA OF ANGOULEME.

Queen of John.

VI.

ISABELLA OF ANGOULEME.

ISABELLA of Angoulême may be called the third Provençal Queen of England, for she was the daughter and heiress of Aymer, or Americus, surnamed Taillefer, Count of Angoulême; and her inheritance, the province of Angoumois, formed the centre of the dukedom of Aquitaine, and had been in possession of her family since the days of Charles the Bald. Through her mother, Alice de Courtenay, she was nearly related to royalty, that lady being the daughter of Peter de Courtenay, fifth son of Louis VI. of France.

But the parents of Isabella little dreamed that their daughter would one day wear a crown, for they considered they were securing a brilliant match when they contracted the fair heiress in her infancy to Hugh de Lusignan, eldest son of the Count de la Marche, governor of the province forming the northern boundary of Aquitaine, and then known as French Poitou. Being a vassal of the French king, this Count was a most formidable neighbour to Aquitaine, for he could at any time raise the *ban* and *arrière-ban*, and pour the feudal chivalry of a large portion of France into the offending provinces of the South.

According to the custom of the times, the person of the little lady was delivered over by her parents to the relations of her betrothed, as the surest pledge of good faith. Thus Isabella was educated and brought up in the strong castle of Lusignan, in the custody of the Count of Eu, the uncle of Hugh. When she was almost fifteen, John, who had recently become King of England, was hospitably entertained by the Count of Eu, on the occasion of his accession to the dukedom of Aquitaine. The principal amusement offered to the royal guest was hunting the deer, the neighbourhood being more celebrated for this sport than any other in France. The beautiful young Isabella was present at one of the hunting parties, and John fell in love with her at first sight. Young Hugh de Lusignan was absent on some distant mission, and his wedding was to be solemnised on his return. Imagine his wrath and dismay on coming home to find his *fiancée* the bride of another. It was not his uncle of Eu who had betrayed his trust. John had at once applied to Isabella's parents for the hand of their daughter, and they, dazzled by the brilliant prospect, had willingly given

consent. Saying nothing of the offer to the Count, they obtained his permission for Isabella to take part in the ceremony at which they did homage to the new king for their possessions, and instead of returning her to Lusignan Castle, arrangements were made as speedily as possible for her union with John, although the Count and Countess of Angoulême were quite aware that they were not only breaking faith with their neighbour, but that the girl secretly preferred the brave, handsome young Hugh de Lusignan to John, who was eighteen years her senior. The nuptials were celebrated with great pomp at Bordeaux, in August, 1200, by the Bishop of Bordeaux and the Bishop of Poitou, who declared that no impediment to the union existed. John had been married on the day that his brother Richard was crowned King of England, to Avis, a granddaughter of Robert of Gloucester, but who had neither been crowned with him nor acknowledged queen, for the Pope had forbidden him to live with her, because the Empress Maude and this lady's grandfather had been half-brother and sister, and the rules of the Church forbidding the intermarriage of cousins applied equally to illegitimate children. Now the Pope desired to prevent John's second marriage on account of the contract with Lusignan, but the attempt failed, because Isabella would not acknowledge that she had agreed to any contract with Count Hugh. Perhaps by this time the girl was so under John's influence that she dared say nothing, or she was too much elated with the thought of sharing the triple crown of England, Normandy, and Aquitaine to consider anything else.

On hearing of this marriage, Lusignan, justly incensed, sent a cartel to the English king, defying him to mortal combat. John, however, affected to treat the message with contempt. "If," said he, "the Count of Lusignan wishes for a combat, I will find a champion to do battle for me." "A champion appointed by the unscrupulous king," returned the brave Marche, "would be either some mercenary ruffian or a common stabber, unworthy of my weapon." So he smothered his wrath and waited patiently for the hour of revenge.

Meanwhile, John carried off his bride in triumph to England, where she was not only crowned queen in London by the Archbishop of Canterbury, but recognised by all estates of the realm at a common council of the kingdom convened at Westminster for the purpose. Among the charters in the Tower is one stating that "Isabella of Angoulême was crowned Queen by common consent of the barons, clergy, and people of England."

The royal couple spent their first Christmas together at Guildford, where, it is recorded, "they distributed a great number of festive garments;" and for some months the Court gave itself up to a continual round of jollity and pleasure. But just after Easter news was brought that Arthur Plantagenet was in arms, that Maine and Anjou had declared for his

cause, and that Count Lusignan had seized the opportunity to raise the standard of revolt both in Poitou and Normandy in revenge for the abduction of Isabella. The whole of John's continental possessions were ripe for rebellion against the rule of a foreigner, which the representative of their rulers had now become; and if Henry II., an active, able soldier and beneficent governor, had found the task of keeping together so scattered an empire a hard one, it was not to be expected that his weak, indolent, unpopular son should have much chance of succeeding. For John, from early youth, had made himself unpopular wherever he went. The character of this King is painted so black in books of general history that we should like to point to some one redeeming trait connected with his private life, but the chroniclers tell us of none. During his father's lifetime he was made governor in Ireland, but Henry II. received so many complaints of his cruelty and injustice that his recall became necessary. He rebelled against a father of whom he was the spoilt darling, and rewarded the generosity of his brother Richard with treachery. Though, like the rest of his family, he was strongly built, yet as a soldier he was cowardly and indolent.

Aroused from the voluptuous life for which his recent marriage formed the excuse, John hastened to Normandy with his bride and established his court at Rouen. The Duchess Constance of Brittany had eloped from her second husband, the Earl of Chester, and, returning to France, married Sir Guy of Thouars, a valiant general and able soldier, who was now actively supporting the claims of her son Arthur to John's throne of England, as well as the dukedoms of Normandy and Brittany. But, in the face of these dangers, John delayed his preparations, and passed his nights in debauchery and his days in bed, or at least, the best part of his days; for Isabella delayed him in her chamber frequently till noon, and this, in an age when the usual hour for breakfast was five in the morning and everyone dined at ten or soon after, did more to make John unpopular with his barons and prove him an undesirable ruler than a long list of murders and acts of tyranny could have done. It must be owned that Isabella rather encouraged her husband's evil life; from the time of his marriage with her he grew decidedly more licentious, cruel, and evil-disposed.

In excuse for John's faults ignorance cannot be pleaded. Like his brothers, he had enjoyed a liberal education, and he shared their literary tastes. From several historical documents we find that he read books of a high character; and during the stay of his court at Rouen, John and his consort superintended the laying of the magnificent mosaic pavement in the palace in that city.

At length word was brought to John that his mother, the aged Queen Eleanor, was

besieged by his enemies in the castle of Mirabel, in Poitou. For a moment a spark of his fiery race kindled in the breast of the degenerate John. By wonderfully quick marches he brought a force into Poitou, and, surprising Hugh de Lusignan and Duke Arthur, took both prisoners. While his mother lived, John contented himself with keeping Arthur a prisoner in Falaise, but he treated Count Hugh with great insult, carrying him and the chief barons of Poitou wherever he went "chained hand and foot in tumbrel carts drawn by oxen, a mode of travelling to which they were not accustomed." Dragged over to England, his companions in chains were for the most part starved to death at Corfe Castle by the special order of the King, but Lusignan was soon removed to Bristol and confined in the donjon of the castle. His somewhat better treatment and subsequent release are attributed to Isabella's influence.

After the death of the queen-mother Eleanor, in 1204, and John's composition with Berengaria for the payment of her jointure as queen-dowager, Exeter and many other towns in the West of England, together with the proceeds of the royalty on the tin mines, were allotted to Isabella as her dowry. The King had already presented her with the royal residence at Berkhamstead.

It was not till after the murder of Arthur that the Queen brought John an heir. Henry, afterwards Henry III., was born at Winchester in 1207, and the year after Isabella gave birth to another son, Richard.

By this time the lovely Isabella, mentioned by historians as the Helen of the Middle Ages, must have deeply lamented her splendid marriage with John, for after the murder of his nephew his temper became very morose, and he placed no restraint on his evil nature.

The baronage of England were now much incensed because John entirely neglected to observe the duties of a king and the laws of the country, while the resources of the country were drained by exactions to supply the royal treasury with money to be wasted in frivolity and extravagance. Though most wasteful in his own expenses—he was "the greatest fop in Europe"—John was very parsimonious in his allowances to the Queen, as the royal records prove.

To curb the growing discontent, John required the nobles to send their children to Court, where, under the name of pages, they were kept as hostages. One anecdote will illustrate the nature of the King's tyranny. John demanded as page the eldest son of William de Braose, lord of Bramber. His lady imprudently told his messenger "that she would not surrender her children to a king who had murdered his own nephew." No sooner were the words uttered than Lady de Braose repented her foolishness, and strove

to avert the King's anger by a present to the Queen of a herd of four hundred cows and a beautiful bull. Their value lay in the fact that all were milk-white except the ears, which were red. But John was not to be thus propitiated. He ordered William de Braose, his wife, and five children, to be taken to Windsor Castle, where they were shut up in a strong room and deliberately starved to death.

John's suspicions were next directed against his wife. As he was in the habit of invading the honour of the female nobility, he naturally thought Isabella must be guilty of infidelity. No proofs appear in history in support of such a charge, but the hired spies having feigned to discover the Queen's lover, John ordered the suspected man and two accomplices to be assassinated, and with brutal coarseness caused their bodies to be suspended over the Queen's bed.

Either on this or some similar accusation, Isabella was placed in restraint. In the year 1212 John commanded one of his leaders "to go to Gloucester with our lady queen, and there keep her in the chamber where the Princess Joanna had been nursed till he heard further from him."

A reconciliation was, however, effected between the King and Queen the year following, when Isabella succeeded to her inheritance of Angoumois. Perhaps the crafty John found it necessary to allow the Queen her liberty in order to secure her property. The widow of the Count of Angoulême came over to visit her daughter, and the two returned to the Continent together.

At this time Philip Augustus of France seized the Poictevin provinces, and to regain them John was obliged to seek the aid of his former foe, Hugh de Lusignan. The Count gave his help only after John had delivered to his keeping the infant Princess Joanna, to be educated, as her mother before her, with the prospect of becoming his bride.

Returned to England, we find the Queen the next year again imprisoned, this time to keep her out of the way while John forcibly abducted Matilda Fitz-Walter, called the Fair. That she was an unwilling victim we have ample proof, and this act of violence was the last of the series which drove the English barons to arm in defence of their rights and wring from John the famous Magna Charter.

The King retired to Windsor Castle fuming with rage at the curb thus put on his actions. From this time he became subject to paroxysms of passionate anger, such as had characterised the later years of former kings. Again this fickle man took his queen into favour. They spent some time together at the dower-castle of Savernake, near Marlborough; then Isabella retired to Gloucester, where the second daughter, Eleanora, was born, and the year after she became the mother of Isabella, married later to the Emperor

of Germany. At Gloucester John placed his heir, Prince Henry, under the guardianship of his mother, and here Isabella resided with all her children till the death of the King.

Deserted by most of his barons, the unhappy John, supported by mercenaries, made a progress through the country, with a view to reducing it to subjection by fear. His cruelty was unbounded; one instance will suffice: with his own hands he every morning set fire to the house that had given him shelter.

Such was John's conduct when the heads of the nobility offered the English crown to Prince Louis of France. John, travelling northward, was crossing the river Wash with much valuable personal property, which for safety always accompanied him, when the tide coming up unexpectedly carried it all away. The King himself barely escaped with his life, and he arrived at Swinshead Abbey worn out in body and mind. Attacked by a marsh fever, which physicians of to-day would probably have called typhus, John continued his journey in a litter as far as Croxton, where, after making confession of his long catalogue of sins and forgiving his enemies, merciful death cut off his powers of evil in this world. The remark by a contemporary historian, "Hell felt itself defiled by the presence of John," speaks volumes for his reputation on earth.

On the death of her husband, Isabella seems to have roused herself to action. She assembled her followers, and, together with the noble Pembroke, sallied from the castle and proclaimed her son Henry king in the streets of Gloucester, and shortly after, though but nine days a widow, she appeared at his coronation in Gloucester Cathedral. Prompt action was necessary; the foreigner was in the land and the people divided. Another energetic measure taken by the Queen was the sending of her second son, Richard, for safety to Ireland; but there is no record that anyone thought of giving Isabella a share in the regency. This fact, following the record of the frequent investiture of queen-consorts with sole regency, throws some light on the character of the Queen, and the position which she held in the esteem of the nobility.

Within a year after the death of John, Isabella retired to her own city of Angoulême. She was still reputed the most beautiful woman of her time, and as her little daughter was living in the castle of Lusignan, not far off, she was again brought into contact with her old lover Hugh, now Count de la Marche, and by her unimpaired charms captivated the heart of the brave knight. Nevertheless, the world was much amazed at hearing that the haughty dowager-queen was married to a simple Count; and as Isabella had not thought it necessary to consult her son, Henry III., or his regency, in the matter, the young King took offence, stopped the payment of her dowry, and appealed to the Pope to dissolve the union. But as the English King was only fourteen years of age, his Holiness refused to

interfere. Extracts from a letter of remonstrance, addressed by Isabella to her son, will show that close intercourse with the crafty King John had developed the natural cunning of the daughter of the South. She writes : "To our dearest son Henry, by the grace of God King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, Isabella, Countess of Anjou and Angoulême, sends health and maternal benediction. We hereby signify to you, that when the Counts of Marche and Eu departed this life, the Lord Hugh de Lusignan remained alone without heirs in Poitou ; and his friends would not permit that our daughter should be united to him in marriage because her age is so tender, but counselled him to take a wife from whom he might speedily hope for an heir ; and it was proposed that he should take a wife in France, which if he had done, all your land in Poitou and Gaseony would be lost. We, therefore, seeing the great peril that might accrue if that marriage should take place (when our counsellors could give us no better advice), ourself married the Count de Marche ; and God knows that we did this rather for your benefit than our own." She closes with a demand for the payment of her dowry. This Henry for some time withheld, but complication of circumstances at length obliged him to make a compromise. It was finally settled by Henry's making good the arrears of jointure and receiving from the hands of his stepfather Joanna, then ten years of age, and known to history as "little Joan Makepeace," in order that she might be given in marriage to the King of Scotland, who desired for his wife an English princess, and whose friendship Henry was as anxious to secure.

But Lusignan's troubles on his wife's account did not end here. Isabella found it impossible to regret her past grandeur as Queen of England. More especially was she incensed and annoyed on finding herself obliged to yield place and precedence to the heiress of Thoulouse, wife of the Count of Poitou, to whom her husband was obliged to do homage, but whose rank she considered inferior to her own. This overweening pride eventually proved her ruin. She would not allow her husband any peace till he had thrown off this yoke and put himself under the protection of Henry III., who wasted much blood and treasure in a useless and disastrous war for the acquisition of French Poitou, entirely to please his mother. Isabella insisted that she was a queen, and she disdained to be "the wife of a man who had to kneel before another ;" but in the end she was obliged to give in, for the unfortunate Count de la Marche lost all his money, his lands were overrun by the French, and his own people were opposed to the war. In 1242, Henry III., after losing the battle of Taillebourg, could assist his mother no further, and she was fain to yield to the entreaties of her husband, and go with him to the camp of the French

king, and there sue for pardon. The celebrated St. Louis then occupied the throne of France, and he received them most generously and kindly.

So the war of precedence came to an end, but adversity had not amended the spirit of Isabella. On the contrary, she treasured up a secret feeling of revenge against the French monarch, and actually suborned one of her followers to attempt his life by poison. The assassin was detected, and revealed the name of his instigator. The worthy Count, her husband, appears to have known nothing of Isabella's guilt, and when a court of inquiry was instituted, and he and his son arraigned before it, each in turn repelled the charge and demanded the battail with Prince Alphonso, their overlord ; but the brother of the King of France asserted that as traitors they were both unfit to meet a true knight. Isabella for a time put a very bold face on the matter, and even took horse and rode with a large retinue to the door of the court-house ; but either she was forbidden to enter, or saw some criminating witness brought forward, for she hastened away. From this moment she yielded to despair, and her transports of fury brought on a very severe illness. When a little recovered, she went to Fontevraud, on the plea of seeking medical aid, but more probably to be under the protection of the English king. Here she found shelter in the apartments kept always in readiness to receive the members of the English royal family when in trouble of body or soul. Matthew Paris says of her, that "she lived at her ease, though the Poitevins, considering her as the origin of the disastrous war with France, called her by no other name than Jezebel, instead of her rightful appellation of Isabella."

Isabella did not feel herself safe till she was hidden in "the secret chamber of Fontevraud," and from this retreat she never emerged ; but, assuming the veil, at the end of two years she died there in 1246.

Henry III. some years afterwards erected a stately tomb and fine statue in her honour in the choir of the church, and hence her remains were transferred from the common cemetery at Fontevraud, where she had been buried by her own request as a penance for her sins.

Of the children by her second marriage, the eldest son only has been mentioned, the valiant Hugh, who followed faithfully in the steps of his renowned father ; but Isabella left besides four sons and three daughters. After her death, her husband became fast friends with St. Louis, whom he accompanied on the crusade to Damietta, and died gloriously on the field of battle. Before leaving France, he sent his younger children to England, where Henry III. provided for them with lavish generosity.



ELEANOR OF PROVENCE.

Queen of Henry 3rd

VII.

ELEANOR OF PROVENCE.

THE year of our Lord 1236 opened on a season of festivity in England, when “merrily rang the marriage bells” for the wedding of King Henry III. and the beautiful young Eleanor of Provence. The Princess had seen but fifteen summers, but by the sunny shores of the Mediterranean maturity is attained at a much earlier age than in our ungenial climate. Her father, Berenger, Count of Provence, was the grandson of Alfonso, King of Aragon, and her mother Beatrice, daughter of Thomas, Count of Savoy. Both were celebrated for their good looks and high literary attainments, and ambition for the advancement of their five beautiful daughters, four of whom, though the Count’s poverty was proverbial, became crowned queens.

Eleanor, the second daughter, shared with her sisters the advantage of being educated by one Romeo, spoken of by Dante as the greatest Italian poet of his time. So, in the land of song, the precocious, talented girl became early skilled in the art of versification; and curiously enough, it was her learning more than her beautiful face which proved her fortune.

Romeo, proud of his little pupil, prompted her to send to Richard, Earl of Cornwall, brother of the King of England, a romance of her own composition. The poem is still extant, and we may safely believe that Eleanor really wrote it herself, for it is undoubtedly a juvenile production, containing marks of evident genius combined with a lack of literary experience. The subject is the adventures of Blandin of Cornwall and Guillaume of Mirenas, who perform wonderful feats of arms and endure great dangers and hardships for the sake of the Princesses Briende and Irlonde (Britain and Ireland), ladies of surpassing beauty.

Richard was already a married man, so he could not avail himself of this graceful and poetical hint that he should undertake to conquer the heart and hand of the lady authoress; but he was not a little elated by the honour thus conferred on him by a princess

whom all Europe spoke of as Eleanor the Belle. However, he good-naturedly recommended her to his brother, Henry III., whom his subjects were desirous of seeing married.

The account of the unsuccessful attempts at matrimony made by this King of England is almost ludicrous. He demanded the hand of a Scottish princess whose elder sister was already the wife of Hubert de Burgh, but the chief barons dissuaded the King from the match, because they feared an increase of the influence of the favourite. Then he made overtures to the courts of Austria, Bretagne, and Bohemia, and, when each in turn refused his offers, he made up his mind to remain a bachelor. But at the end of four years, Henry, now twenty-nine, made offers to the Earl of Poithieu for his daughter Joanna. The contract was actually signed, and Henry's emissaries were on their way to Rome to obtain the Pope's dispensation, when his brother showed him Eleanor's poem and gave a glowing account of her beauty and talents. The fickle Henry at once changed his mind, and sent word to his ambassadors to return home. Soon after he despatched three priests to the court of Provence, and, though he knew Berenger to be very poor, demanded two thousand marks as dowry with his daughter. But the impecunious Count, estimating Eleanor's charms of mind and body at their full value, refused the offer. It must be remembered that Isabella of Angoulême was still alive and in receipt of the moneys usually set apart for the queen-consort. This is in all probability the key to the mystery why Henry found it so difficult to secure a wife. For once the King of England was in sober earnest; he lowered his demands step by step, and still the Count remained firm. At length, in desperation, he ordered his ambassadors "to conclude the marriage forthwith, either with money or without, but at all events to secure the lady for him and conduct her safely to England without delay." Accordingly the contract was signed, Henry agreeing to dower the Princess in the reversion of the jointure of the queen-mother, Isabella of Angoulême.

The departure of Eleanor from her father's dominions was made the occasion for a grand display. Her parents, with a gay cavalcade of knights and ladies and their attendants, accompanied the Princess and the English ambassadors to the borders of Provence. They travelled through Navarre, and the friendly King Thibaut fêted her and her company for five whole days, and then, with the nobles of his court, escorted her to the French frontier. Here she was met by her elder sister, the Queen of France, who, with a splendid retinue, accompanied her as far as the coast and saw her safely embarked for England. She landed at Dover on the 4th of January, 1236, and was met by the expectant bridegroom at Canterbury, where the marriage was solemnised by St. Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Great was Henry's delight with his southern bride, whose beauty lay in the

animated expression of her beautiful dark eyes, her luxuriant black hair, and clear skin, rather than in classical regularity of feature; and it is gratifying to note that from the moment of meeting the royal pair became and remained devotedly attached to one another, so that through all their subsequent folly and its miserable results we hear of none of those conjugal dissensions which embittered the lives of English kings and queens before and after them. Henry conducted his bride in great state to London, where the citizens received her with due honour, and no doubt with the anticipation of great pleasure, for the court of England had not been graced by the presence of a queen for twenty years. At all events, the Londoners caused their streets to be cleansed of mud and refuse—no slight work in those days, before regularity of building was introduced or any system of drainage thought of. Henry suggested this clearance, but the lively lady from the south of France must have needed all her youth and gay spirits to make her first impressions of our misty, gloomy London in midwinter at all cheerful.

After the cleaning, bright coloured tapestry and silks, flaunting banners and wreaths of flowers, were hung from the windows, making a gay and brilliant sight. The citizens, claiming their right of cellarers to the King, took part in the coronation procession. "They venturously mounted swift horses and rode forth to accompany the King and Queen, clothed in long garments embroidered with gold and silk of divers colours. Their steeds were finely trapped in array, with shining bits and new saddles, each of the three hundred citizens bearing a gold or silver cup in his hand for the royal use, the King's trumpeters sounding before them."

Little did the Londoners think how the beautiful young bride they were welcoming with so much honour would in later years cause the weak and foolish King to devour their substance by his extortion and extravagance.

Within doors, too, the King had been thoughtful for Eleanor's comfort. He had ordered many alterations in the Westminster Palace. Among other instructions we find the following: "That the royal chamber at Westminster be painted a good green colour, like a curtain; that in the great gable or frontispiece of the said chamber a French inscription be painted, and that the King's little wardrobe also be painted of a green colour to imitate a curtain."

A few days before the coronation, Henry laid the foundation-stone of the Lady Chapel in Westminster Abbey. Never previously to the coronation of Eleanor had aught approaching the magnificence displayed on this occasion been seen in England, and long after did the heavy expense incurred for it embarrass the sovereign and compel him to have recourse to unjust measures. When he applied to his subjects for help, they replied,

that "they had amply supplied funds both for his marriage and that of the Empress, and as he had wasted the money, he might defray the expenses of his wedding as he could." The Empress here referred to was Isabella, the King's sister, recently married to the Emperor of Germany, the residue of whose dowry he employed towards his own marriage festivities, after presenting her with a most magnificent trousseau, the details of which he personally superintended. If Henry took pride and pleasure in his sister's dress, we can easily believe that he lavished his time and money on the adornment of his youthful bride, who was very fond of jewellery and fine clothes. Henry liked not only to be well dressed himself, but to see those about him in handsome clothing, so he made liberal grants of silk, satin, velvet, and other rich materials for the attire of his courtiers. On Isabella's entry into London, both she and her lord were arrayed in a stuff called baudekins, which, from its many gold threads, Matthew Paris describes as "glittering very gloriously."

It was a sad day for England when Eleanor entered it, for with her came numbers of worthless and needy foreigners, on whom Henry wasted his favours. Peter of Savoy, the first of these, was the Queen's uncle, and he obtained so much influence over the weak-minded King, that Henry entrusted him with much of the administration of the kingdom, including the distribution of Church patronage, and this unscrupulous man employed his power entirely to serve his own purposes. To please the Queen, Henry bestowed on him, to the great offence of his English subjects, that part of London which took the name of the Savoy.

In June, 1239, Queen Eleanor brought Henry an heir to the English crown. The Prince was named Edward, in honour of Edward the Confessor, whose memory was still very popular. At this time a comet appeared in the heavens, and as it reached its zenith on the day the royal heir was born, the Queen eagerly demanded of the astrologers what the sign foretold. They replied, that the bright light which preceded the phenomenon announced a brilliant reign for the infant prince, but that the smoke which followed it forboded ill-fortune to his son and successor. The birth of a heir served to strengthen Henry's affection for his Queen. He ordered her private chamber or dressing-room in Westminster Palace "to be freshly wainscoted and lined, and that a list or border should be made, well painted with images of our Lord and angels, with incense-pots scattered over the list or border."

At the christening of Prince Edward, the celebrated Simon de Montford was one of the sponsors, and had the honour of holding the royal infant; but almost immediately afterwards the Queen took a dislike to him, and he was disgraced, though Henry had

created him Earl of Leicester, and but recently bestowed on him the hand of his sister, the Countess of Pembroke.

So soon as the Queen was sufficiently recovered to travel, the court removed to Woodstock. Here again Henry indulged his taste for decorative art, which Eleanor evidently shared; for among the orders given by the King to the keeper of the palace to prepare the royal apartments, we find the following details: "To cause an extension of the wooden lattices in two windows of our Queen's chamber, and to cause a pent to be made over these windows, covered with lead; and an aperture to be made in the pent, between the hall of our Queen's chamber and the chapel, towards the borders of our herbarium, and two windows of white glass looking towards the said borders. The pictures now in the hall, all the courts, fountains, and walls of our houses there to be repaired."

The next year Thomas, Count of Savoy, and Boniface, his brother, visited England. Henry entertained them right royally, and because money for the court expenses was not otherwise forthcoming, the King extorted it from the Jews, under threat of expulsion from the kingdom. When the Archbishopric of Canterbury fell vacant by the death of the venerable St. Edmund, Boniface, a most unclerical person was installed in his place. Some time afterwards this prelate attempted a visitation of the monks of St. Bartholomew. This priory belonged to the diocese of London, so the monks naturally refused to receive the Lord Bishop in an official capacity; but Boniface, using abusive language, knocked down the sub-prior, and calling his attendants, who were all his own countrymen and well armed, they shamefully beat and ill-treated the monks. The populace of London demonstrated their feeling by hooting Boniface in the streets with the cry, "Where is this ruffian, this cruel smiter? He is no winner of souls, but an exacter of money—a stranger born, unlearned, and unlawfully elected." All of which taunts were perfectly true. In vain the poor monks complained to their own bishop and to the King: Henry would take no steps against the Queen's uncle.

Eleanor's eldest daughter was born in 1240, and named Margaret, after her mother's sister, whom we have spoken of as Queen of France; but this connection by marriage did not preserve peace between Henry and Louis IX. At the instigation of his mother, Isabella of Angoulême, Henry engaged in a useless and most disastrous war with the French king. Parliament granted him the required subsidies on condition that he ratified the charters, which Henry was always willing enough to do, though he did not think it necessary to perform his promises. After the unfortunate battle of Tailleburgh, Louis IX. generously granted Henry a truce, so the English king sent for Eleanor to Bordeaux, and

there they enjoyed themselves during the whole winter with feasting and amusements, as if they were rejoicing over a glorious victory. Here Eleanor occupied herself in negotiating a marriage between her youngest sister, the lovely Sancha, and Richard of Cornwall, the King's brother. This Earl was devotedly attached to Henry, and had hitherto somewhat counterbalanced the bad influence exercised by the unprincipled Peter of Savoy. Thus the subtle Eleanor secured a brilliant match for her sister, and, through her, undermined Richard's power at court.

It was not until Henry had exhausted all the resources of the treasury that he could be induced to return to England. He then commanded his nobles to meet him at Portsmouth as if he were a conqueror returning to his kingdom in triumph, instead of coming back a defeated and dishonoured sovereign, who had not only lost his possessions in Poitou, but had pledged himself to pay five thousand pounds a year to France.

Soon afterwards the Countess of Provence came to London as escort to her daughter Sancha, whose nuptials were performed here. The visit was made the occasion for splendid entertainments, for "the King thought he could never do enough to testify his love to the Queen and her family." The expenses were again defrayed by heavy exactions. Indeed, it is useless to particularise further the frivolous waste of public money which continued during the greater part of this reign. Henry, with a childish love of pleasure and finery, thought of nothing beyond the gratification of the moment; and Eleanor, having no sympathy with her husband's subjects and a most exalted idea of the state and power of royalty, encouraged him in every possible way.

After his disastrous visit to France, Henry found himself involved in troubles on all sides. His Parliament refused him money, and even proposed to appoint four of its members to carry on the government. The nobles were personally alienated from him, because on any frivolous pretext he would seize the estates of any one of their number. The Pope, hearing of his unpopularity, demanded money which the King dared not refuse, the Prince of Wales and the King of Scotland declined to do homage to him, and Louis of France determined to utterly crush the power of England in his country.

The death of Isabella, the queen-mother, in 1246, gave a little pecuniary relief by the reversion of the dower lands to Eleanor, but it was only temporary. Isabella's daughters and three ambitious sons being sent to this country, as we have before mentioned, by their father, the Count de la Marche, absolutely penniless, Henry was too soft-hearted not to do everything he could for them, and the further expense thus incurred increased the dissatisfaction of his English subjects.

The state of misrule in England was now such that men set the laws at defiance, and

fearlessly plundered whenever occasion offered. Even the persons of the King and Queen were not held sacred, for when travelling through Hampshire in 1245, soon after Prince Edmund was born, their luggage was stolen and themselves exposed to the low scurrility of a riotous mob.

The Queen was no less unpopular than the King, especially among the Londoners, because she used her influence to compel all ships laden with valuable merchandise to land their cargo at Queen's Wharf, Rotherhithe, or at Queenhithe, because she was entitled to the dues at those ports; and she further insisted on receiving her tenth of all fines which Henry unjustly imposed.

All this was pursuing a very shortsighted policy, for had the King and Queen carefully propitiated the merchants of London they would have had their help against Leicester and other disaffected barons; and their support was not a thing to be despised, for, from the commencement of the reign of Eleanor of Aquitaine, now almost a century back, the merchants of England had been amassing large fortunes through the trade in wine and other luxuries carried on with the south of France. Some idea of the money at their command may be gathered by the fact that, Henry being so reduced that he had to offer for sale his plate and jewels, the Londoners, who had before pleaded poverty, readily purchased them. At this the King was greatly enraged, and said, "If the treasures of Augustus Cæsar were in the market, I suppose the City of London would purchase them. Those clownish citizens, who style themselves barons, are an inexhaustible treasure in themselves."

As a punishment, Henry and Eleanor spent Christmas in London, and extorted gifts from all the chief men, amounting to quite a large sum of money.

Again, a year later, being reduced to great straits for want of funds, they not only lessened the number of their attendants and cut down both their wages and allowances, but became the uninvited guests of the nobility and principal officials every day at dinner-time, so as to avoid the cost of keeping up a table; and they not only exacted large presents at parting, in acknowledgment of their condescension, but they brought with them, besides Prince Edward, a crowd of those foreigners whom the country detested, and whose influence at court during this long unhappy reign gave rise to the proverb that "no one but a Poictevin or a Provençal had any hope of advancement either in Church or State."

The celebration of the nuptials of Margaret, the eldest daughter of Eleanor, with Alexander III., King of Scotland, was the sole gratifying event that interrupted the long course of misfortunes which spread over many years. In 1251 the Archbishop of York offered to defray the cost of the wedding if it took place at York. The King and Queen

were as much pleased as their innocent children could have been. The bride was aged ten, and the bridegroom two years older. Christmas was the day chosen, and the ceremony was performed at an early hour, that the day's pleasure might last the longer. The gorgeousness of the costumes worn at this feast has been handed down to posterity by several authors, and those of Eleanor and the ladies of her court are said to have displayed not only extreme richness, but a fine taste for picturesque effect.

In 1252 the Pope, having probably exhausted the more direct means of raising money in England, raked up the old story of Henry's breach of promise of marriage with the Countess of Ponthieu, and the King was obliged to pay a large sum to obtain the bull proclaiming "the contract of the King of England with Joanna null and void, and his marriage with Eleanor of Provence good matrimony." This was the more absurd that the said Joanna had now been for some years the wife of the King of Castile.

Since his quarrel with Henry, Simon de Montfort had passed six years as Governor of Gascony. In that province he was unpopular on account of the severity of his rule. On his recall Prince Edward, then but fourteen years of age, was appointed his successor, but he so mismanaged the affairs of the country that the Gasecons formed a project to deliver Guienne to the King of Castile, and Henry was obliged to take command of his army in that country in person. He left the Queen to govern England jointly with Richard, Earl of Cornwall. These are the words of his charge: "I commit the guardianship of Edward, my eldest son and heir, and of my other children, and of my kingdom of England, and all my other lands in Wales and Ireland, to my illustrious Queen, Eleanor."

Eleanor, left at home with the reins of government practically in her hands—for since his marriage the Earl of Cornwall had never opposed the wishes of the Queen or her family—was fully determined to exercise her own sovereign will. One of her first acts was to demand a large sum of money from the Londoners, and when they resisted her illegal claims she imprisoned the sheriffs, a proceeding that drew on her general indignation. The City of London, which had even then enjoyed its almost independent government under royal charter, never forgot this conduct of the Queen, as we shall notice later.

The next year, after a useless attempt to obtain money from Parliament for the war expenses, Eleanor forwarded a considerable sum to Henry out of her privy purse; and soon after, the war being over, the King entreated Eleanor to come to Bordeaux, accompanying this invitation with a request that the Queen would extract from the Jews and bring with her the funds for the wedding festivities of their son Prince Edward. Eleanor was by this time weary of the cares of government, so leaving Richard of Cornwall in charge of the kingdom, she journeyed to Bordeaux with her sister Sancha, arriving there

in May, 1254, and was affectionately welcomed by Henry, who had been separated from her for nearly a year. But state policy demanded that Eleanor should proceed without delay, accompanied by her son, into Spain. There Prince Edward was married to the Infanta Eleanora of Castile, the daughter of that Joanna whom his father had long ago treated so shabbily. Henry remained at Bordeaux till the return of his beloved queen with the young bride and bridegroom. Perhaps he did not care to visit at the court of Castile.

From Bordeaux the King and Queen of England went to Chartres, where they were met by St. Louis of France and Queen Margaret, who had invited them to spend a few days in Paris. In the French capital they occupied the palace of the Old Temple. Henry bestowed a very large sum on the French poor, and entertained his royal relatives with princely hospitality and regal magnificence, at a celebrated banquet, known as the "feast of kings," when Henry sat on the right hand of the King of France, and the King of Navarre on his left.

With all her faults, Eleanor was very affectionate, and she now had the gratification of meeting all her four sisters, three of whom were queens like herself, and whom she had not seen since childhood.

Returning to England, the King and Queen entered London with unusual pomp and splendour, and again obliged the unwilling citizens to defray at least a part of the expenses. About this period the Pope granted to Prince Edmund, Eleanor's second son, a boy of ten years of age, the title of King of Sicily, to the great delight of the vain and foolish parents, and Henry had almost engaged in a war to maintain the boy's imaginary rights, when his attention was diverted to Scotland, where his eldest daughter, the little Queen, was in great peril. John Baliol and the Comyns, regents during the minority of Alexander, had—so report said—imprisoned the young King and Queen in Edinburgh Castle.

Eleanor sent her own physician in disguise to Scotland, to see how matters really stood. He was fortunate enough to gain an interview with Queen Margaret, who confided to him all her woes: "How she had been rudely torn from her husband, and kept apart from him in a doleful damp place, the bad air of which had seriously injured her health; and so far from having any share in the government, they were treated with the utmost contumely, and were in daily peril of their lives." Eleanor, always a loving mother, was greatly alarmed for the safety of her daughter, and insisted on accompanying Henry on the campaign he undertook against the oppressors; but when she reached Wark Castle a serious illness, brought on by anxiety, confined her to her bed, and her recovery was very slow, even though news soon arrived that the King and Queen of Scotland were quite safe, and

on their way to visit her. The Earl of Gloucester had, in imitation of the physician, obtained secret entrance to the castle of Edinburgh, and then introduced his own followers, who speedily overpowered the guard. Baliol and his accomplices were captured and brought before Henry at Alnwick, but as they at once implored his mercy, the King forgave them; indeed he may not have had any power to punish those who were not his subjects. On Baliol, who held some lands under him, he inflicted a heavy fine. Eleanor being still far from well, it was arranged that her daughter should remain with her, as we learn from a letter written by Henry to Alexander III. "The Queen of Scotland is to remain with the sick Queen, her mother, at Wark Castle, till the said Queen is sufficiently recovered to be capable of travelling southward."

When Eleanor regained her strength she went to Woodstock with the King and Queen of Scotland, and here the court held high festival in honour of the Earl of Cornwall and his wife, who had just been elected to imperial sway over Germany, and had already assumed the supplementary titles of King and Queen of the Romans. The fresh exactions caused by these festivities, coupled with a famine in the land, and Eleanor's extortion of her queen-gold, made the sovereigns more unpopular than ever. As if to forget their difficulties, shortly after, when the Duke of Bretagne arrived in England to claim the hand of Princess Beatrice, they plunged recklessly into fresh extravagances, and the nuptials were celebrated with great magnificence.

The Earl of Leicester by this time headed a formidable section of the barons opposed to the court and its injustices. Henry, having violated the Provisions of Oxford, and in great fear of his many creditors, shut himself up in the Tower of London, while Eleanor remained in the fortress of Windsor. The next year, 1261, Leicester was some months absent from the country, so when the much-loved wife of the King of the Romans, the Queen's sister Sancha, died, her English relatives gave her a magnificent funeral.

In the autumn Henry went to look after his affairs in Gascony and caught an ague which detained him there some months. Prince Edward meantime had been carrying on a war against the Welsh, and was in great need of money to pay his troops. His mother would have helped him if she could, but she also was suffering from pecuniary difficulties; so with her knowledge and consent Edward went to the Temple in London. Here, it should be explained, the Templars kept a sort of bank, where persons of property consigned money and jewels to the safe keeping of these valiant knights, who were pledged to personal poverty. Edward requested or obliged the officers to show him the Queen's jewels, which she had pawned to the Templars, on the plea that they were not safely kept. He then took forcible possession of them, and of all other moneys he could lay hands on, and

carried them to his mother at Windsor. This reprehensible conduct still further alienated the people, who saw not only a breach of common honesty but an almost sacrilegious act.

Soon after this seizure of the jewels some of the adherents of Leicester organised a terrible onslaught on the Jews. The sufferings of this much-oppressed people in this reign are indescribably horrible. Plundered by the King, Queen, and barons, and disliked by the people, they yet formed a considerable element in the population and wealth of London. The Queen, in spite of exactions which proved the contrary, was thought to favour them, because so many came to this country on her marriage, the Provençals having always tolerated, if not befriended, the Hebrew race.

Now at the sound of the bell from St. Paul's, and led on by Baron Fitz-John and Bucknell, the infuriated rabble set upon the Jews, plundering and killing without mercy. Eleanor and her ladies from the Tower of London heard the shouts of the murderers and the cries of the murdered. In great alarm they hurried into the royal barge, hoping to escape unobserved up the river to Windsor; but the barge had scarcely reached London Bridge when it was descried by the maddened crowd, which rushed on to the bridge uttering the most disgusting and fearful menaces against the terrified Queen, to whom they applied the grossest terms of reproach and hatred, some pelting her with filth, while others hurled down huge stones on the barge to destroy it. Eleanor only escaped by a hasty retreat, reaching the Tower half dead with terror.

On hearing this painful news, Henry at once removed the Queen and royal family for safety to France, whence he returned to face the troubles that threatened not only his throne but his life, at home. Prince Edward, on guard at Windsor, brooded with smouldering anger over the insult offered to his mother, and longed for means of redress. He had not long to wait before open warfare was declared, and the battle of Northampton gave temporary success to the royalist party. Had Henry followed up this victory with spirit all might have gone well, but he weakly pardoned most of the important prisoners taken in the battle. One little incident, showing only the King's generosity, was by his sister-in-law of France almost made the occasion of a quarrel with his queen. As the royal army marched southwards, the pretty Countess of Gloucester fell into Henry's hands at Tunbridge Castle: the dame was wife of one of the leading rebels, but he at once set her at liberty, saying that "he did not war on ladies." A garbled version of this story reaching Margaret of France, she says in writing to the mild old King that "she would hasten the departure of her sister to him, according to his request, because she feared that, on account of her long delay, he would marry some other lady, and that as long as the Countess of Gloucester

remained in his vicinity she should be impatient till she knew that her sister had joined him."

Then followed the disastrous battle of Lewes. Its termination might have been far different if Prince Edward, who had repulsed the part of the army opposed to him, which contained many Londoners, had not recklessly pursued them with his cavalry, crying "Queen Eleanor!" till he had slaughtered almost the whole of them. But meanwhile Henry, left without cavalry support, was captured by the rebels; and on his return the Prince also was obliged to give himself up to Leicester, who took them to Wallingford Castle. The remnant of the royalist army retired to Bristol.

History is slightly uncertain whether Eleanor at this time remained safely in France or was in England, "espying the land, for the purpose of liberating her brave son." Her anxiety was evidently extreme, for she went to Sir Warren de Basingbourne at Bristol, begging that he would with all forces at his command surprise the Wallingford garrison and rescue the royal prisoners. Basingbourne, a devoted adherent of the spirited young Edward, willingly did the Queen's bidding. Approaching the castle by night, he attacked it so vigorously at daybreak that he won the outer wall in spite of a desperate defence made by the garrison. Alarmed for the result, the besieged shouted from the inner wall that if the assailants persisted Prince Edward should be shot to them by the mangonel (an engine of war used for casting stones), and the Prince was allowed to speak with his friends from the battlements. As he assured them that further persistence would cost him his life, the royalists retired greatly dispirited; but this attempt furnished an excuse for the Earl of Leicester to send the royal prisoners to his own castle of Kenilworth.

But the Queen was not to be baffled. She next won over Lady Maud Mortimer, who was herself inclined to the King's side, though her husband had joined Leicester. This lady devised the well-known ruse by which Edward, after tiring the horses of his guard by running races with them, escaped on a fresh charger which was concealed in a neighbouring grove.

Eleanor also collected a French army and manned a fleet ready to invade England in the cause of her husband. This force, fortunately, remained so long windbound that its services were never required. The Queen could have had no conception of the harm which foreign troops would do in this country. Her one idea was to free her beloved husband; but a contemporary chronicler says, "She succeeded in getting together a great army, commanded by so many dukes and earls as seems incredible; and those who knew the strength and power of that army affirmed that if they had once landed in England,

they would presently have subdued the whole population of the country ; but God in His mercy ordered it otherwise."

Meantime Prince Edward had fought and won the battle of Evesham, in which one of his soldiers was very near killing the very man he sought to rescue. Henry had been placed by the Earl in the very front of the battle, and had already received a wound in the shoulder, when he called out to the soldier who was about to despatch him, "I am Henry of Winchester, your King : slay me not !"

As the Earl of Leicester and his son Henry de Montfort were both slain in the battle, the kingdom enjoyed some measure of tranquillity. Neither Henry nor his queen were lovers of blood, so at the close of this period of the Barons' war they spared the lives but seized the money of the principal offenders. Shortly after, those who had nothing more to lose but their lives, again created disturbances ; but the growing popularity of Prince Edward and the arrival of the Queen from the Continent, accompanied by the Papal legate, armed with excommunications against Leicester and his followers, greatly helped to suppress all further attempts at rebellion.

Tranquillity now reigned in the kingdom till 1267, when the Earl of Gloucester headed a revolt and attacked the palace at Westminster. Prince Edward was conspicuous for his bravery on this occasion, and he encountered and defeated the famous outlaw and last partisan of Leicester, Adam de Gordon, in Altonwood, and led him prisoner to Guildford, where the Queen graciously granted him a free pardon.

Having aided in quieting the kingdom, Prince Edward and his brother Edmund now departed for Palestine on a crusade. Eleanor had scarcely recovered from the parting with her beloved sons, when a series of deaths among her dear ones afflicted her affectionate heart. Boniface, Archbishop of Canterbury, the Queen's uncle, died, and was shortly followed to the grave by the King of the Romans. King Henry was much affected by the death of his brother, and retired for change of scene to Bury St. Edmund's. Here a fatal distemper seized him, and, though in a dying state, he insisted on removal to London, because some alarming riots were occurring in the neighbourhood. So soon as he had received assurance from the Earl of Gloucester and the Archbishop of Canterbury that the succession of his absent son Edward was secure, he quietly died, in the fifty-sixth year of his reign and the sixty-sixth of his age. This was in 1272, and, according to Henry's own wish and the desire of the Queen, the body, royally robed and crowned, was deposited in the leaden coffin from which the remains of Edward the Confessor had lately been removed. Henry fancied, and Eleanor seems to have shared the superstition, that a special sanctity attached to the vessel which had enclosed the body of

the saintly king. The expenses of Henry's funeral, which was most magnificent, were defrayed by the Knights Templars—most generous of them, when we remember how his son had robbed their treasury but a few years previously. Henry was buried in Westminster Abbey, near the shrine of the Confessor whom he had so highly venerated, and his sumptuous monument there still remains in good preservation.

In the same year that her husband died Eleanor lost her two eldest daughters. The amiable Queen of Scotland, to whom she was fondly attached, died, leaving but one child, the little "Maid of Norway," as she was called, from her marriage with Eric, king of that land. The beautiful Duchess of Bretagne, who came to England for the coronation festivities of her brother Edward, also died quite suddenly.

But her private griefs did not make Eleanor more considerate towards the feelings of her subjects. Under Henry's will she was left regent till Edward should return from Palestine, but one of the first things he did when he came back was to rectify a wrong committed by his mother. Again it was the Londoners who suffered. Eleanor had obtained custody of London Bridge for six years, and they informed the new King that "the said lady Queen taketh the tolls and careth not how the bridge is kept." After this the Queen-mother resided seldom in London, but lived in much privacy at Waltham or Lutger's Hall, until, in 1280, she took the veil at the nunnery of Ambresbury, in Wiltshire. Of the nine children whom she had brought into the world, only two survived their father. Eleanor, before retiring from the world, refounded the hospital of St. Katherine, originally a good work of Matilda of Boulogne, which had been dissolved for mismanagement. The queen-mother retained her royal dowry till her death, and employed the money in charitable purposes, and she also retained the love and respect of her son Edward. In after life he frequently quoted as sound the advice given him by his mother before she took her final vows, and after her death he treated her remains with great respect. The year of her death, 1291, was a sad one for Edward; in it he lost both wife and mother. Thomas Wilkes, in his chronicle, makes the following statement: "The nuns of Ambresbury, not being able to sepulture the queen-mother with sufficient magnificence, had her body embalmed so that no corruption ensued, and in a retired place reverentially deposited it, till Edward returned from his Scottish campaign." Accordingly the King completed the obsequies of his mother with great pomp in her nunnery church, but her heart he carried to London, and there caused it to be interred with due honour in the Church of the Friars Minor.

Some notice of the dress used by this Queen on high festivals may interest our readers. She wore an open Gothic crown, ornamented with elaborate trefoils adorned with

a rich circlet of gems. The ample mantle, fastened in front with a clasp of gems set in wrought gold, has a small cape-like collar and is bordered with gold lace of an elaborate scale pattern. The tight-fitting robe beneath the mantle is of gold diapered brocade, with sleeves cut deep over the hands. She wore also a profusion of jewellery about her neck, hands, and waist.

Having followed this Princess from the cradle to the grave, we close her story with regret that, though a constant wife and affectionate mother, she will ever be remembered in this country as the most unpopular queen-consort that ever shared the throne of an English king.

VIII.

ELEANOR OF CASTILE.

ELEANOR, Queen of Edward I., justly surnamed the Faithful, was Infanta of Spain, the daughter of Ferdinand III. of Castile, and Joanna, Countess of Ponthieu. This princess was scarcely ten years old when the bold young heir of England, himself but fifteen, came, accompanied by his affectionate and pleasure-loving mother, Eleanor of Provence, to the Court of Burgos, to claim his affianced bride. The Spanish princess was under the guardianship of her half-brother, Alphonso, the reigning sovereign of Castile. This king is known to fame as the inventor of the Alphonsine Tables of Astronomy; his subjects called him "Il Sabio," or "the Wise," but his wisdom seems to have been of the kind more useful to a philosopher than a king, for in after years he became so absorbed in his studies that his people deposed him. One cause of complaint against him was his supposed infidelity, because he once remarked "that he could have devised a better way of ordering the movements of the celestial bodies." By the light of later science we can easily interpret this as a doubt existing in his own mind as to whether his elaborate astronomical scheme was quite correct. At all events, his people thought him unfit for a king, and made his son, Sancho the Brave, ruler in his stead. But all this happened years after the summer of 1254, the date of which we are speaking. Then King Alphonso was not quite lacking in worldly wisdom. We may wonder that her brother should trust little Eleanor to the tender mercies of an English prince, when we remember the indignities her family had already suffered from the Plantagenets: that Henry III. had jilted her mother, Joanna of Ponthieu, and that her grandmother, from whom Eleanor derived the lands of Ponthieu, which she held in her own right, was Alice of France, whose long engagement to, and subsequent repudiation by, Richard Cœur de Lion, had been the scandal of Europe, and even imperilled its peace. But the kingdom of Castile was only separated by the Pyrenees from the fair province of Guienne, governed by English royalty, and which Alphonso had recently invaded unsuccessfully. Our ease-loving Henry III. lent a willing ear to Alphonso's proposal to cement the treaty of peace now concluded between them by the



ELEANOR OF CASTILE.

Queen of Edward 1st

marriage of Eleanor and Prince Edward; only, the Castilian wisely stipulated, that England's heir should come to Burgos and marry his sister five weeks before Michaelmas Day. On this occasion there was no attempt at a breach of faith. The Prince and his mother came to Burgos, as we have said, and there the nuptials were celebrated amidst a round of festivities and tournaments. The gay Eleanor of Provence was so well pleased that she stayed some months in Spain, and, we may be sure, did her best to win the affection of the pretty little bride, who was for a time to be in her charge; and the mother and the child-wife both looked on with pride and pleasure while the dashing young Edward, distinguishing himself in the lists, won his spurs, receiving knighthood from the hands of Alphonso himself.

When the magnificent festivities were all over Eleanor accompanied her mother-in-law to Bordeaux, where Henry III., not to be outdone by his neighbour of Castile, had prepared, regardless of expense, for the honour and diversion of his daughter-in-law, a series of banquets and pageantries which he could ill afford, and which drew forth the angry remonstrance of his English nobles on his reckless extravagance.

From Bordeaux Eleanor went with her new relations on their visit to the King and Queen of France, and, with the other royal children, was doubtless present at the celebrated "feast of kings," given by Henry in Paris.

Eleanor crossed to England with her husband's parents, and stayed there about two years; then she returned to the Continent and resided either at Bordeaux or with Marguerite of France, always under the protection of Queen Eleanor. She was quietly completing her education, whilst Prince Edward wandered from tournament to tournament in search of adventure and fame. In consequence of the unhappy civil war in England, and the prominent part taken in it by her husband, it was not till the year 1265 that the young couple were able to live together. When the worst of the political storm in England had blown over Eleanor landed at Dover, and was received by her victorious Edward, who lodged her in the Castle, probably in the very same chamber whither, years after, Charles I. led his pretty French bride, Henrietta Maria, and where, "wrapping his arms around her, he kissed her with many kisses."

History leaves us to imagine the conduct of Edward on this occasion, but he ought certainly to have been pleased with the sight of his bride. She was now twenty-one years of age, and in the interval since their last meeting had grown from a pretty child to a beautiful woman. Her features were delicate and regular, her face oval; from her soft dark eye shone the light of quiet steadfastness and gentle love, whilst her lovely smile betokened a happy cheerfulness of temper.

Eleanor, too, had reason to be pleased with and proud of her lord and master, for was he not the hope and pride of his country? Had he not just delivered it from the curse of civil war? Was not the fame of his renown as a warrior on every lip? And not only for personal valour had the fierce young Edward obtained glory. He had conducted with much success the border war against the Welsh, and even the famous Earl of Leicester himself had praised his military ability. It was before the glorious victory of Evesham, when Edward learned that the Earl was anxiously awaiting the arrival of his son, Simon de Montfort, with reinforcements. Edward advanced to meet him, and at Kenilworth surprised his camp and utterly scattered his forces. Without allowing Leicester time to glean intelligence of his son's disaster, he divided his troops into two bodies, one of which he pushed forward along the road leading from Kenilworth to Evesham, with orders to carry in front of them the banners captured from De Montfort's army. He himself made a circuit with the other division of his forces, with the intention of attacking the enemy in another quarter. Leicester, experienced and accomplished as he was in the art of war, was entirely taken by surprise. When at length the truth flashed upon him, he acknowledged the excellent disposition and great superiority of the royalists, and exclaimed, "The Lord have mercy on our souls, for I see our bodies are the Prince's." And so the event proved. The struggle was but short before Leicester and all his chief adherents fell before Edward and his army.

From Dover, Edward conducted his wife to Canterbury, where, with their royal parents, they were hospitably entertained by the Archbishop; then they proceeded to London, where the inhabitants gave them a warm reception. While attending the Court at Westminster Eleanor resided at the Savoy Palace, which Eleanor of Provence had purchased from Peter of Savoy for the use of her children; but during the next few years the Princess spent much of her time at Windsor, finding that fortress a safer and pleasanter abode than any in London, where she would naturally share, however innocent, in the unpopularity of the Queen, because she, too, was a Provençal princess. At Windsor Eleanor gave birth to a prince, who received the ill-omened name of John, and also in quick succession to a daughter and another son, named respectively Eleanor and Henry.

When not at Windsor, Eleanor lived at the castle of Guildford, which formed a part of her dowry. It was during one of her visits there that Prince Edward met in the forest surrounding the castle the famous outlaw, Adam o' Gordon, and engaging in fierce conflict, overthrew his adversary, and then generously spared his life. As the ancient ballad says—

The prince hath brought him to Guildford tower,
Ere that summer's day is o'er ;
He hath led him to the secret bower
Of his wife, fair Eleianore.

Edward, having secured the good word of his wife in favour of the wounded outlaw, the young couple lead this notorious robber to the King and Queen.

But the prince hath kneeled at his father's feet,
For the Gordon's life he sues ;
His princess so fair hath joined in the prayer,
And how can King Henry refuse ?
Can he his own dear son withstand,
So dutiful, brave, and true,
And the loveliest lady in all the land,
Kneeling before him too !

Certainly the kind old king did love this "loveliest lady," and he was so pleased with the beauty of her little ones that he largely increased their mother's dower.

Every page of her history reflects the faithful love which Eleanor bore her husband, but although when near her Edward certainly yielded to her gentle influence, yet at this period he cannot be upheld as a pattern husband. On the contrary, during his young wife's abode in France, his intrigue with the pretty young Duchess of Gloucester involved the whole court in broils and dissensions, which did not cease till 1270, when Edward set out for Palestine. With Prince Edward's determination to take up the cross, and in connection with St. Louis make one grand effort to expel the infidels from the Holy Land, it is easy to sympathise. He had, under the necessities of war, practically held for a short time the sovereign power in his father's country, but was too dutiful and affectionate a son to think of usurping the English throne during Henry's lifetime ; yet as a successful general he must have felt within himself the strength and capacity for government, and chafed at the follies and weaknesses of that father whom he yet fondly loved. So panting to signalise himself once more in the field of arms, in 1270 he set sail from Portsmouth, with the intention of joining his consort at Bordeaux, whither she had preceded him about a month.

Eleanor insisted on accompanying her lord on the Crusade. In vain did her ladies endeavour to impress on her the folly and madness it was for a young and delicate princess, nurtured in the lap of luxury, to encounter the hardships, horrors, and fatigues of such an undertaking. Her only reply was, "Nothing ought to part those whom God has joined ; and the way from Syria to Heaven is as near, if not nearer, than from England or my native Castile." With such an argument it was useless to reason.

Eleanor left in England her three children; the two little boys she was destined never to see again.

From Bordeaux Edward and Eleanor, with a very large train of followers, both from England and France (for there were many young nobles ready to follow the Prince wherever he might think fit to lead), journeyed to Sicily, where the king of the land received them courteously. Here the news soon reached them that St. Louis of France, whom Edward had counted on to unite with him in attacking Palestine, was slain, and his army almost annihilated, by the infidel enemy in Tunis. The King of Sicily entreated the English Prince to abandon the enterprise, and doubtless the Princess, in spite of all her bravery, would have been thankful that he should have taken the advice. Her heart must have quailed as she listened to the tales of the people of Sicily about the many whom they had received on their journey eastward, never to return; of how, long ago, Queen Berengaria had suffered shipwreck and privation in following the brave Cœur de Lion, and at the end of the long list of sufferers, how Marguerite of France, at whose court Eleanor had herself visited, had shared her husband's disasters and his captivity by the King of Egypt. Yet the greater the evil foreboded the less willing was the Princess to part from her beloved husband; and Edward, at the suggestion of turning back, said, "*Sangue de Dieu!* if all should desert me, I would lay siege to Acre if only attended by Acon, my groom!" So, early in 1271, they recommenced their journey.

The achievements of this last of the Crusaders are historically insignificant. The Christians might win battles, but they could not hold the advantage. The Saracens swarmed in the country. Landing at Ptolemais, Edward made an expedition to Nazareth, slew its garrison, and defeated the Saracen army sent to its relief. In his second campaign he vanquished the enemy in a pitched battle at Cahone. After spending the winter in Cyprus, he returned with reinforcements from there, and, in early spring, commenced the siege of Acre.

By his deeds of valour Edward revived the glory of the English name in the East. His personal prowess was quite equal to that of his great ancestor, Richard Cœur de Lion, of military renown. For the moment his name was the terror of the land; and had circumstances favoured him, he was a far more formidable enemy than Richard, for to courage and skill he united self-control, constancy of purpose, and administrative ability, qualities which Richard had lacked.

His wife's following of her husband was not the mere residence at a place of comparative safety, such as Berengaria's had been. Eleanor was always near her lord whatever the danger.

And now we are come to the anecdote which has done more than anything to fix in the minds of some of us the memory of Queen Eleanor and the last Crusade.

So great was the terror which the name of Edward had struck into the hearts of the Saracens, that they at last came to the determination of employing a person to assassinate him. "The Prince," says the historian, Daniel, "was dangerously wounded in three places of his body, with a poisoned knife, by a treacherous assassin, of which wounds, when no medicine could cure him, his loving wife, Queen Eleanor, extracting the poison by sucking them, perfectly healed them." It is a pity that this romantic legend is entirely untrue. Common sense tells us that the act of sucking would have been entirely useless unless performed immediately upon the infliction of the wounds, and before the poison had time to mingle with the blood; but Walter Hemmingford's chronicle gives a very different version of the tale. It appears that the Emir of Joppa, a Saracen commander, under pretence of a desire to embrace Christianity, sent to Prince Edward. The messenger, who was in truth an emissary of the famous Old Man of the Mountain, who kept a band of assassins, was admitted, and while Edward was in the act of reading the letter which the stranger put into his hands, the latter made a sudden plunge at the Prince's heart with a poisoned poignard, but which Edward fortunately caught on his arm. The two were alone at the time; Edward, who was suffering from the extreme heat of the climate, lay extended on a low couch. In an instant he raised his foot and felled the assassin to the ground with a kick on the breast. A fierce struggle ensued, and the Prince received another wound, this time in the forehead, but he soon dispatched his assailant with his poignard. Hearing the scuffle the attendants rushed in, and in the excitement the Prince's harper beat out the assassin's brains with a footstool; whereat Edward turned on him with a sharp reproof, asking, "What was the use of striking a dead man?"

The Prince's wounds, although slight, might well have proved serious in the hot, unhealthy climate of Palestine, even if there had been no poison on the dagger, and very soon unfavourable symptoms appeared; mortification threatened, and it was evident that his life was in imminent danger. Eleanor, from the moment of the disaster, had watched composedly by the bedside of her sick husband, attending to his wants with an unwearying care, prompted by the softness of her disposition and the tenderness of her love. But when she saw the flesh blackening, and the other watchers looking gloomily at one another, she became alarmed, and the Prince demanded of the surgeons, "Tell me the truth, and fear not." The Master of the Temple recommended incisions, which would cause excruciating pain, but seemed the only hope. "If suffering may again restore my health," said the Prince to the surgeon about to operate, "I commit myself to you: work

on me your will, and spare not." At this crisis Eleanor entirely lost her firmness and presence of mind, and in the anguish of grief gave vent to a violent flood of tears; thereupon the Prince's brother, Edmund, and his favourite knight, John de Vesei, fearing that her sobs and tears might have a prejudicial effect on the sufferer, carried her from the sick room by main force, in spite of her struggles and entreaties. "It is better," they said, "that she should scream and cry, than that all England should mourn and lament."

Not long after his recovery from this wound, Edward concluded a truce with the Sultan and started homeward. In Sicily he was entertained with great magnificence by Charles of Anjou, the King, but in the midst of the feasting the news came that Eleanor's two beautiful boys were both dead. The poor Princess greatly mourned the death of her darling children, whom she had left three years before, but Edward bore the news with great fortitude and composure. A great bereavement was, however, in store for him: a few weeks later he learnt that his kind, affectionate father was no more. The Prince was so greatly affected as to astonish the King of Sicily, who could not understand how a man should sorrow less for the loss of his heirs than for a foolish old man, who bequeathed him a throne. Edward's answer is worth remembering. "The loss of infants," he said, "may be repaired by the same God that gave them; but when a man has lost a good father, it is not in the course of nature for God to send him another."

Edward, now King of England, was in no hurry to assume the duties of the throne. The kingdom of England was at peace, and its internal administration, under the newly-established representative system, more settled than ever before. So Edward and Eleanor felt free to remain another year in their Continental dominions, and now accepted the hospitality of their friend, Pope Gregory X., at Rome, where the lively and youthful couple, just fresh from their Eastern adventures, must have been welcome guests. Some months later, at Bordeaux, the lives of the royal pair were preserved in a manner looked upon by them as quite miraculous. The King and Queen were sitting talking together on a couch in their bedchamber, when a sudden flash of lightning killed the two attendants who stood behind them, while Edward and Eleanor remained uninjured.

Edward now proceeded overland to Calais, signalling himself at several tournaments on his way, and in August, 1273, arrived safely with his Queen at Dover. Eleanor brought home with her two children, a daughter born in Palestine, and named from her birthplace Joanna of Acre, and a son and heir, recently born at Maine, whom she named Alphonso, after her learned brother of Castile.

Arrived in England, the King and Queen were accorded a hearty and costly reception by the citizens of London—a matter of astonishment when we consider the exactions they

had so recently suffered at the hands of royalty. The exterior of the houses along the principal streets was hung with tapestry, and the conduits flowed with the choicest wines. The more affluent of the merchants showered gold and silver on the royal retinue as it passed under their windows in Cheapside; the whole area of the palace-yards was occupied with wooden buildings, where for a whole fortnight a free feast was offered to all comers.

But the most curious record in connection with the welcome of Edward and his coronation is made in a manuscript preserved by Sir Robert Cotton: "King Edward was crowned and anointed as rightful heir of England with much honour and worship, with his virtuous Queen; and after mass the King went to his palace to hold a royal feast, among all the peers that had done him honour and worship. And when he was sat at meat, King Alexander of Scotland came to do him service, and to worship, and a hundred knights with him, horsed and arrayed. And when they were alight off their horses, they let their horses go whither they would, and they that could catch them had them to their own behoof. And after that came Sir Edmund, the King's brother, a courteous knight and a gentleman of renown, and the Earl of Gloucester, and the Earls of Pembroke and Warrenne, and each of them led a horse by the head, and a hundred of their knights, wearing their lord's armour, did the same; they also set them free, that whoever chose might take them still at their liking. And the aqueduct in Cheapside poured forth white wine and red, like water, for those who would to drink at pleasure."

Llewellyn, Prince of Wales, was not present at the coronation. He had recently, during the civil wars, recovered that part of the principality which the Norman kings had conquered, and so, when Edward demanded of him why he had not come to tender the homage due to his overlord, he refused to acknowledge the supremacy of the King of England.

This revolt in Wales gave Edward the wished-for opportunity of making his former conquests in that country absolute. He assembled his military tenants and began those cruel wars of subjugation which have left an indelible stain on his valiant name. The faithful companion who had followed him so far abroad was not now to be parted from her lord, while he was warring in mountainous Wales; but wherever the glittering and bristling spears of the warrior prince were to be found, there close by was the silken litter and sweet smile of Eleanor of Castile.

The chance of war soon brought into Edward's hands Llewellyn's fair bride-elect, the Lady Eleanor de Montfort, who was captured at sea as she was on her way to Wales, by some Bristol merchants, and delivered to the King. Edward placed her under the care of

his dear wife, who did all in her power to lighten the captivity in which she was held, till Llewellyn, finding it impossible to recover the lady by force of arms, gave in his submission. Then the Queen, by Edward's desire, conducted Eleanor de Montfort to Worcester, where the wedding was celebrated. The King himself gave the bride away, and the Queen was also present at the ceremony and the marriage feast which followed it. Unfortunately, this happy settlement of affairs was not permanent. Llewellyn was soon again in arms, and his own death and the destruction of his family gave Edward a power in the country he knew how to make the most of. His personal presence in Wales was a necessity, as the Welsh barons did not easily submit. In the summer of 1283 Eleanor held her court in Rhuddlaw Castle, and here gave birth to a daughter, the Princess Isabella; and the following year, when she again promised to become a mother, Edward conducted her to the magnificent castle of Caernarvon, which he had recently built. The walls of this castle, which are of great height and very strong, stand yet exactly as when Eleanor first entered them by the portal still called "Queen Eleanor's Gate." The neighbouring barons of Snowdon had not yet submitted, so for greater security Eleanor was lodged in the Eagle Tower. The chamber where she was delivered of her son, Edward of Caernarvon, is still pointed out; it is a little dark room, but twelve feet long and eight broad, built in the thickness of the walls, and without a fireplace. Its walls were hung for the occasion with tapestry, which Eleanor was the first to use in this country for household purposes. Formerly tapestry had been employed only for ornamenting the interior of churches. We may here note that Eleanor also used carpets instead of the rushes with which the floors of even palace apartments had hitherto been strewn; and among other southern refinements we find in her list of plate "a fork of crystal, and a silver fork handled with ebony and ivory." So Queen Eleanor did not feed with her fingers, as was the universal custom among the English, even till so late as the time of James I.

But to return to Caernarvon and the infant Prince. So soon as the news of his birth was brought to Edward, he hastened from Rhuddlaw to Caernarvon to see the Queen and her son, who was a very promising child. Within three days the chief barons assembled to tender their final homage to Edward, and entreated him to grant them a Welsh governor. The King, in high good humour, at once promised them a Prince born in the land, and who could speak no word of English, and then brought before the astonished chiefs his infant son, to whom they were obliged to take oaths of allegiance. The oaken cradle of the infant Edward, hung by staples and rings to two upright pieces of wood, of rude workmanship, but with considerable attempt at ornament, is still preserved

in Caernarvon Castle. It has rockers, and is crowned by two birds, probably doves or eagles. Eleanor procured for him a Welsh nurse, that the first words he lisped might be in the language of his inheritance. The death of his elder brother, Alphonso, a year later, made this baby Prince the heir to both England and Wales.

In 1285 Alexander, King of Scotland, died, leaving an infant grand-daughter, Margaret of Norway, his sole heir. Here was an opportunity for Edward to mount a step higher toward the summit of his ambition—the union of the whole island under one crown. The barons-regent of Scotland willingly consented to the betrothal of their little sovereign to Edward of Caernarvon, and when the contract was signed the King and Queen of England went over to Aquitaine. Here they passed three years, and Eleanor became the mother of twin daughters, named Beatrice and Berengaria.

From the Continent Edward was recalled by the disquieting news of the death of the “Maid of Norway.” By arrangement she was to return to Scotland and thence to the English court, to be educated under the care of the good Queen Eleanor; but the poor little girl, who was delicate, died at the Orkneys of the effects of a rough and stormy voyage from Norway. Her death was a sad calamity for Scotland; it was the beginning of those devastating wars with England which reflect little credit on Edward I. The English King had already despatched to Scotland six noblemen and the Bishop of Durham to take possession of the country in the name of the Princess Margaret and his son Edward. Now he justified his interference in the affairs of the North by claiming suzerainty in Scotland.

Edward had left his Queen abroad, in good health, with the request that she would follow him as quickly as she could travel. He had not been long in Scotland before he received the distressing intelligence that Eleanor was dying at Herdby, near Grantham, in Lincolnshire, of a marsh fever. At first Edward was not summoned, as the malady did not seem serious, till three days before the end. Forgetting, in the dread of losing one so dear to him, the necessities of state and the dictates of ambition, Edward, turning his back on Scotland, hurried rapidly to Herdby; but before he arrived his faithful Eleanor had breathed her last. She died on the 29th of November, 1290, in the forty-seventh year of her age. The magnificent manner in which the King solemnised her obsequies is evidence of his love, his admiration, and his distress. In the deepest grief he followed the body of his beloved one from Grantham to Westminster, never leaving it during the whole of that sad thirteen days’ journey. Daniel tells us that “The King in testimony of his great affection to her, and as memorials of her fidelity and virtues—in which she excelled all womankind as much as she did in

dignity—all along the road in the places where the body rested, erected goodly crosses, engraven with her image.” There were originally thirteen of these beautiful memorials, but only two of them, Northampton and Waltham, escaped the fanaticism of the Reformation, and are still standing. Each resting-place was chosen in the central part of a country town, and by order of the King the bier was met by the principal ecclesiastics of the place, who carried it before the high altar of the cathedral or church, where they performed over it requiems for the repose of the soul of the departed. The selection in Dunstable of the site of the proposed cross is thus described by a chronicler of the town: “Her body passed through Dunstable, and rested one night, and two precious cloths were given us and sixty pounds of wax; and when the body of the Queen was departing, her bier rested in the centre of the market-place till the King’s chancellor and the great men there present had marked a fitting place where they might afterwards erect, at the royal expense, a cross of wonderful size, our prior being present and sprinkling holy water. This ceremony was repeated in each town till Westminster was reached, and the royal remains deposited in the Lady Chapel, at the feet of Henry III. Her monument, still almost as perfect as the day it was erected, is a work of great excellence. On a cenotaph of grey Petworth marble, and under a rich Gothic canopy, reclines the female figure, executed in copper-gilt, habited in the simple costume of the thirteenth century. The attitude of the figure is at once graceful and dignified; the long, wavy tresses fall naturally from under the regal diadem on the beautifully moulded shoulders. One delicate hand clasped a sceptre, now broken away, while the other is closed over a cross on the breast. The countenance is serenely smiling, and the delicate features have an individuality uncommon in monumental statuary. A verge around the table on which the statue lies has this inscription in Saxon character:—“Here lies Alianor, wife of King Edward, formerly Queen of England, on whose soul God for pity have grace! Amen.” According to a curious custom of the times, her heart was enclosed in an urn, and it was placed in the church of the Black Friars, London, set in a rich painting or enamel work.

Edward endowed Westminster Abbey with gifts to defray the expenses of many prayers for the soul of his wife, and of the wax lights which were kept continually alight round her tomb till the time of the Reformation.

The artist who designed the magnificent altar-shaped tomb of this queen was the celebrated Pietro Cavallini, and to him also was entrusted the construction of the Charing cross in the same style. This Charing cross, a name very familiar to Londoners, stood in what is now known as Trafalgar Square, on the spot at present occupied by the statue of

Charles I.; and so often as the King passed in or out of the grounds of his royal palace at Westminster he was reminded of his *chère reine*, as he called Eleanor in the French tongue, which was still the medium of familiar conversation with the English sovereigns. Thus, "Charing Cross" signifies the "dear queen's cross," and every time the word is used an unconscious tribute is paid to the virtues of the faithful Eleanor. One more word should be said of the Eleanor crosses. They were not erected for mere ornament, but formed a convenient centre at which alms were distributed to the poor and other acts of public charity performed, and they were also the open-air pulpits from which the Church taught the precious truths of Christianity to the ignorant and outcast.

Eleanor, though a foreigner, won great popularity in England by her gentle, kindly ways and the regularity of her court and household, which formed a striking contrast to those of her predecessor. That the refined and accomplished Spanish princess must have found much to put up with in the rough manners of the English and the Welsh nobility, is clear from the fact that Edward revived an old law which threatened heavy punishments on any who "should strike the queen, or snatch anything out of her hand." Eleanor and Edward were liberal patrons of the arts, and it was owing to the care and interest taken by the Queen in useful industries that a few sheep, of a famous Spanish breed, were introduced into England, and on the favourable slopes of the Cotswold Hills increased to such a degree that a century later the product of their wool became a source of great wealth in this country.

Walsingham gives a pleasing summary of Queen Eleanor's character. His words are—"She was a loving mother, the column and pillar of the whole realm; therefore to her glory the King, her husband, caused all those famous trophies to be erected wherever her noble corse did rest, for he loved her above all earthly creatures. She was a godly and modest princess, full of piety, and one that showed much pity to the English nation; ready to relieve every man's grief that sustained wrong, and to make them friends that were at discord."

IX.

MARGUERITE OF FRANCE.

WHEN Edward I. had devised and executed every memorial of respect and honour for his *chère reine*, Eleanor, which affection and grief could suggest, he tried to find distraction in his sorrow by prosecuting with great vigour his war against Scotland ; but not even ceaseless activity could relieve the mental trouble, and he fell into a state of morbid melancholy.

“On fell things he thought and waxed heavy as lead,
For sadness him o’ermastered since Eleanor was dead.”

For years accustomed to the fond companionship and ready sympathy of the most amiable of women, the King at length resolved to seek comfort in a second wife. The lady selected was Blanche la Belle, sister of the King of France, and whose charms were much talked of. In 1294, Edward sent ambassadors to ascertain whether the reputation she had acquired was merited, and with authority, if such were the case, to treat for her hand. It is amusing to read that this forlorn widower made minute inquiries about the princess, even to the form of her hands and feet and the turn of her waist ; and so satisfactory were the replies that Edward became enamoured of her unseen perfections, began a correspondence with her, and was in hot haste to conclude the marriage treaty.

Her brother, Philip le Bel, was the son of Philip le Hardi, and grandson of the celebrated St. Louis, but he inherited none of the noble and generous qualities of that devout monarch, being, on the contrary, noted as a crafty and unprincipled prince. This Philip took advantage of the passion of his brother of England to act a part unparalleled in history, except by the conduct of Laban to Jacob with regard to Leah and Rachel. He demanded that the duchy of Guienne should be settled on any son that Edward might have by Blanche, after which it was to descend to the heirs of this son, finally reverting to England in the event of a failure of issue in that line. To this Edward agreed, and in accordance with the form of feudal tenure, surrendered the duchy to Philip in order to receive it again



MARGUERITE OF FRANCE.

Queen of Edward I.st

under the fresh agreement. But no sooner had Philip obtained formal possession of the duchy than he refused to give it up, and for the name of Blanche substituted that of her sister Marguerite, a mere child. A fierce war ensued, and this lasted four years, till, in 1298, the Pope was called in as mediator. The result of his arbitration was, that "Guienne was to be restored to its right owner, that Edward I. should marry Marguerite, and that she should be paid the portion of fifteen thousand pounds left her by King Philip le Hardi, her father."

Marguerite had been substituted for Blanche because her brother had for the beauty a more brilliant prospect in view, namely, a marriage with the eldest son of the Emperor of Austria. As Marguerite had now reached her seventeenth year, and report placed her goodness, if not her beauty, above that of her sister, King Edward submitted to the change, and he never had cause to regret it.

Marguerite landed at Dover in September, 1299, and a few days later was married to the King at Canterbury by Robert de Winchester, the new Queen, in accordance with a time-honoured custom, being formally presented with her dowry by the King at the church door, in the presence of all people assembled. The royal wedding does not seem to have been a very grand one; indeed, owing to the extravagances of the preceding reign and the expenses incurred by Edward's many wars, economy in the royal household was desirable, and Edward practised it partly from policy and partly from inclination. A plain soldier, his personal tastes were simple; except on state occasions he wore the dress of an ordinary citizen, and one day when a bishop remonstrated with him on the simplicity of his attire, as unsuitable for a king, he said, "What could I do more in royal robes, father, than in this plain gaberdine?"

Edward was just sixty at the time of his second marriage, but more handsome and active than many younger men. Marguerite employed a chronicler, named John o' London, to record the events of her illustrious husband's reign, and under her direction he wrote the following description of the King. "He was one of the goodliest persons that could be seen; taller than most men (six feet two), finely shaped and well made; his eyes round, gentle, and dovelike when pleased, but fierce as a lion's and sparkling with fire when he was disturbed; his hair crisp or curling, his nose prominent and raised in the middle, his chest broad, his arms agile, his limbs long, his feet arched, his body firm and fleshy, but not fat. He was seldom ill, and neither lost his teeth, nor was his sight dimmed with age. He was so strong and active that he could leap into his saddle by merely putting his hand on it."

Of Marguerite's personal appearance nothing favourable can be said, except that her

expression was sensible and good-natured; she had the long, large, straight nose slanting forward and hanging over the short upper lip—a type of countenance familiar in the portraits of French kings before and after her time, but which cannot be called beautiful. As Edward treated his second Queen with all respect and love, we conclude that her gentleness and sweetness of disposition compensated for her lack of beauty.

A month after her marriage the new Queen made the customary entry into London, but news was brought to Edward that in his absence his chief barons had withdrawn and disbanded their forces instead of following up the success recently gained at Falkirk, and so, much incensed, he was obliged to leave his young bride and hasten to Scotland. Marguerite was lodged in the royal apartments of the Tower, and Edward issued a royal mandate to the Londoners, “that as his beloved companion the Queen would sojourn in the Tower of London, he enjoins that no petitioner from the city shall presume to approach that spot, lest the person of the Queen be endangered by the contagion being brought from the infected air of the city.” This was because a disease of an infectious nature was prevalent in parts of London. Ever since Edward’s return from the Crusade the pestilence had troubled the city, and from the writings of the court physician, it seems that this was the small-pox, imported from Syria. Along with a description of the symptoms we find one treatment mentioned as most efficacious, namely, wrapping the patient in bright red cloth, and hanging the sick-room with the same. How full of ignorance and superstition was the art of treating as practised in the Middle Ages even on kings and queens! During the next few years the greater part of Edward’s time was spent in Scotland, where the celebrated hero, William Wallace, by his patriotic struggles against the usurper, revived the drooping spirit of the Scottish people, so that no sooner had Edward crushed a revolt in one direction than it broke out in another.

When not deemed too dangerous, Marguerite followed her lord on his campaigns, and during the winter stayed in the north, generally at Cawood Castle, a residence situate seven miles from the city of York, and belonging to its archbishop. Not far from here, at Brotherton, a village on the banks of the Warfe, the Queen gave birth to her eldest son, Thomas Plantagenet, Earl of Norfolk, from whom is lineally descended the noble family of Howard, and in his right its head enjoys the office of earl marshal of England. Marguerite’s second son was born at Woodstock, August 5th, 1301. He was named Edmund, and in later years created Earl of Kent by Edward II. The Princess Mary, third daughter of Edward and Eleanor, came from her cloister to keep the Queen company during her illness, and on her recovery the two made a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury, and offered rich gifts. Marguerite must have been a model stepmother, for

we find that Princess Isabel, Countess of Hereford, was constantly with her, and when the Prince of Wales fell into disgrace with his father, through the medium of this sister he obtained the good offices of the Queen.

The Christmas of 1301 was spent at Dunfermline, as the whole of Scotland, except Stirling Castle, had submitted to Edward, and afterwards the court made a triumphal progress southward, taking a circuitous route, however, that they might secure as much good hunting as possible, for the King was passionately fond of the pastime, and always much engaged with his dogs and falcons when not in war. The young Queen, too, was never so happy as when in the saddle, and joined the King on his hunting excursions whenever circumstances permitted. In his passage to London the King removed the Courts of King's Bench and the Exchequer thither from York, where they had been held for the preceding seven years, so as to be more within Edward's reach from Scotland.

To celebrate his victories Edward now held a splendid tournament in London, said to have been the most magnificent of the times. To this, the one entertainment on a large scale given by Edward since his coronation, all the young nobles came from far and wide to show off their skill in arms before so competent a judge as the warrior-king. Prince Edward received the honour of knighthood on this occasion, and was solemnly invested with his principality of Wales.

Marguerite now kept her court at Westminster, where the Queen's apartments in the palace had been restored after a destructive fire which occurred there before her marriage. Curiously enough, this Queen was never crowned, though we know that a crown was provided for her to wear on state occasions, because Thomas de Frowick, goldsmith, of London, urgently demanded payment for making it, and the answer stands recorded in the Household Book, that "he may take his bill to the King's exchequer, and the exchequer clerk should pay him £440 in part of his bill."

Marguerite inherited the pious and charitable disposition of her grandfather, St. Louis, and many are the instances recorded of her using her influence with her husband to obtain forgiveness of debtors to the Crown, and also of her excusing the payment of fines due to herself. In the city of Winchester she was deservedly beloved, because she saved it from the King's displeasure. About this time, Bernard Pereres, an important hostage from Bayonne, entrusted to the Mayor of Winchester, succeeded in making his escape, and Edward was so angry at the circumstance that he ordered the Sheriff of Hampshire to seize the city of Winchester and declare its liberties void and the citizens reduced to the condition of feudal villeins, and he furthermore imposed an enormous fine on the offending mayor, and ordered him to be imprisoned in the Marshalsea till it was

paid. Now the young Queen remembered that on her arrival in England the people of Winchester had received her with most pleasing marks of loyalty; and, further, that she possessed a charter wherein Edward had granted her all fines levied from that city. She interceded for the place, and the King, yielding to her pleadings, released the poor Mayor. Marguerite remitted one half his fine and took easy security for the rest. At Winchester the Queen's third child, Eleanor, was born; the infant lived but a few months. The citizens of Winchester were by no means the only people in trouble succoured by the gentle Queen. Early in 1303 a mysterious burglary was committed at the King's treasure-house at Westminster, and much valuable property in plate, jewels, and money carried off. Suspicion fell on the Prince of Wales and his worthless companions, but when the King's treasurer, the Bishop of Chester, accused Gilbert de Clare and Piers Gaveston of being concerned in the matter, young Edward so grossly insulted the prelate that the King, already angry, forbade him to come within five leagues of his Court, and two years later, on account of his unruly and lawless conduct, the heir of England was confined in Windsor Castle with only two gentleman attendants, and those selected by the King. Finding this enforced seclusion very little to his mind, the Prince wrote thus to Queen Margaret through the Princess Isabel: "We entreat and request you especially to beg our lady the Queen, our dear mother, to beg the King to be pleased to grant us two more valets to dwell with us, Gilbert de Clare and Perot de Gaveston, for if we had these two we should be much relieved from the anguish which we have endured, and yet daily suffer, from the restrictions at the pleasure of our lord the King." It was not likely that Edward would consent to the restoration to the Prince of those very undesirable friends who had already decoyed him from the path of virtue; but no doubt the young step-mother did help to bring about the reconciliation between father and son, which took place a year before the old King's death.

In 1305 Blanche, Duchess of Austria, the Queen's beautiful sister, died, and prayers were commanded for her soul by King Edward, because, as he said, "she was the sister of his beloved consort, Marguerite." From this it may be inferred that Edward retained no malice against Blanche, believing no doubt, as was the general opinion, that the better sister of the two, if not the fairer, had fallen to his lot.

The peace, which seemed firmly established after the downfall of Wallace and his shameful death, was but of short duration. The country was soon again in arms under Robert Bruce, now crowned King of Scotland in the Abbey of Scone. The crown used on the occasion had been manufactured by one Godfrey de Coigners, who was seized for the offence and convicted by the King's council. Edward I. was not usually tender towards

either "Scottish traitors," as he called them, or their accomplices, but he let Godfrey go free; the record runs, "We pardon him solely at the intercession of our dearest consort, Marguerite, Queen of England."

The Queen accompanied Edward on his last Scotch campaign, and the "*Lanercost Chronicle*" records that the King came to the monastery of that name October 1st, 1306, "very sick and infirm, attended by his Queen, Marguerite;" that after a brief stay they passed to Carlisle Castle, but shortly returned to Lanercost and abode there till February. Edward never fully recovered from this illness, and when in the summer he made an effort to reach Scotland he became seriously ill at Burgh-on-Sands. Feeling his end approaching, he summoned Prince Edward to receive his parting admonitions. In these he commanded "that he should carry his father's bones about with him in some coffin till he had marched through all Scotland and subdued all his enemies, for that none should be able to overcome him while his skeleton marched with him;" also that he should love his little brothers, Thomas and Edward, and, above all, treat with respect and tenderness his mother, Queen Marguerite. Edward, though he disregarded the orders to continue the Scotch war, fully carried out his father's wishes with regard to his step-mother, for he ever treated her with the utmost respect and affection, and was kind to her sons.

A few weeks after her husband's death Marguerite accompanied Edward II. to Boulogne, as it was the King's dying wish that she should be present at her step-son's marriage with her niece, Isabella of France. Her appearance in public at this early stage of her widowhood does not betoken any want of respect for her late lord, because, as her sons stood next in succession to the Crown, custom required that she should be one of the witnesses to the new King's marriage, and she was also present at the birth of Edward's eldest son and heir. During the ten years that Marguerite survived her husband she led a life of great retirement, chiefly at Marlborough Castle, on the borders of Savernake Forest, expending the greater part of her large dowry in charity and for the encouragement of art. She died at Marlborough in 1317, at the early age of thirty-six, and was buried in London, at the church of the Grey Friars. Her body was interred before the high altar, in the choir built at her cost some years before; Edward II. defrayed the expenses of the funeral.

X.

ISABELLA OF FRANCE.

ISABELLA, Queen of Edward II., was a princess of higher rank than any who had shared the throne of England since the Conquest, for she was the offspring of two sovereigns, Philip le Bel, King of France, and Jane, Queen of Navarre in her own right. Her three brothers, Louis le Hutin, Philip le Long, and Charles le Bel, each in turn wore the French crown. At four years old Isabella was betrothed to Prince Edward of Caernarvon, on the occasion of his father's marriage with her aunt Marguerite, and in 1303, about five years later, the formal dispensation of the Pope having been procured, the contract was ratified in Paris in the presence of the King and Queen of France, the Count of Savoy and the Earl of Lincoln being procurators on behalf of the Prince.

Scarcely had Edward I. breathed his last when his son, the new king, dispatched the Bishop of Durham and the Earls of Pembroke and Lincoln to the French court to arrange for the solemnisation of his marriage at the earliest possible date. There was no immediate hurry necessary, for Isabella was but just thirteen, and although Edward might urge the commands of his dying father, yet, because they were not so much to his taste, he utterly disregarded the late monarch's still more urgent injunctions that he should not leave Scotland till the country was entirely subdued. The new king hastened with his stepmother Marguerite to Boulogne, the meeting place appointed by the French king; he threw away a crown in order to gratify a passing whim, and his first act affords an index to the character and subsequent history of this Prince, who, possessing no real vice, yet by his weakness and folly brought ruin and death on himself, and misery on his country.

The wedding was celebrated in January, 1308, at Boulogne, on the festival of the Conversion of St. Paul. Besides the parents of the bride and a most magnificent suite, there were present at the ceremony Marie, Queen-dowager of France, the bride's grandmother, the King and Queen of the Romans, the King of Sicily, Louis, King of Navarre, the bride's brother, and her aunt Marguerite, the widow of Edward I. For a whole fortnight the

feasting was kept up, and tournaments held, in which the nobility of each country took part. Much is said by the writers of the time in praise of the beauty of the bride and bridegroom, for Edward II. was counted the handsomest man in Europe, and Isabella, though a mere child, had already won the name of "The Fair." Unfortunately the physical beauty of the King only concealed a mind weak as water, and so constituted as to be the willing prey of aspiring and showy favourites; that of Isabella, a soul full of tiger passions, to which, when roused, honour, principle, and humanity would be as chaff before the wind.

On the 7th of February the royal couple landed at Dover, where Piers Gaveston and a crowd of English nobles and their dames were in waiting to welcome the bride and bridegroom and attend them to Westminster. To his worthless favourite Gaveston, Edward had intrusted the administration of the realm in his absence. He now greeted him with great warmth, embracing him in the most extravagant manner, calling him brother, and treating him as an equal, thereby greatly offending the young Queen and disgusting the Counts of Valois and Evereux, the King's uncles, who had accompanied Isabella as guests to the coronation.

The King evidently regarded Isabella as a mere child, but if this was true as to her years, in mind at least she was old enough to realise fully her position, and too true a daughter of the cunning, crafty Philip le Bel to forget or forgive the King's offence in lavishing on a boon companion that show of affection and regard which, as a beautiful young bride, she had every right to expect. From the moment of landing those of the nobility who were jealous of Gaveston marked with joy the dislike which Isabel evinced for him, and at the coronation festivities this was still further increased.

The royal party abode at Eltham till the preparations for the coronation were completed. These Edward entrusted to Gaveston, who either grossly mismanaged them or his orders were purposely disobeyed; the result was a scene of disorder and confusion, and murmuring arose on all sides.

The number both of guests and spectators on this occasion was very large, and owing to the wretchedness of the arrangements many serious accidents occurred, casting a sad gloom over the festivities; one knight, Sir John Bakewell, was actually trodden to death. The ceremony itself was fixed so late in the day that it was three o'clock before it was over. In the procession Henry of Lancaster bore the royal rod, surmounted with the dove, and Edward's other uncle, Thomas of Lancaster, the Curtana, or sword of mercy. This was as it should be, but great and general was the indignation when the much-coveted privilege of bearing the crown of St. Edward, which should have been accorded to a prince of the

blood royal, was granted to the favourite Gaveston, son of a mere gentleman adventurer from Gascony, and who was dressed for the occasion more handsomely than the King himself. Burning with ill-suppressed indignation, a further trial was in store for the noble company. The dinner-hour was delayed till the darkness of the short winter day had set in, and when at length the viands did appear, though abundant and varied, they were vilely cooked and badly served: none of the proper ceremonies were observed; there was such a paucity of officers for the table, and they were running one against another in such a way that all was disappointment, confusion, and scandal. The Queen received many slights which she was encouraged to believe were studied.

Isabella brought to this country a more magnificent wardrobe than had ever been seen here before; her dresses, of which she had at least twenty, were made of bright velvets, shot taffety, gold and silver stuff, and many-coloured cloths. Of linen for the bath she brought nearly five hundred yards, and the tapestry for her chamber was figured in lozenges of gold with the arms of France and England. In addition, she had two magnificent gold and jewelled crowns and a number of gold and silver dishes, spoons, and drinking-vessels. Her father had also given Edward handsome presents of rings and other jewellery, all of which Isabella now had the mortification of seeing bestowed on Gaveston.

The French nobles returned to their own country swelling with the ill-feeling produced by the discomforts of the coronation, and loud in resentment of the kind of treatment received by their princess. Isabella despatched by them a piteous letter to the King of France, in which she minutely describes the insults offered to herself, and complains of the preposterous infatuation of the King in regard to Gaveston. All this was so much advantage thrown into the hands of the discontented nobility, and Philip le Bel was not the man to let such a chance of acquiring influence in the councils of a rival nation slip through his fingers.

It soon came to light that Edward, owing to his father's Scotch wars, had no money in hand to meet the coronation expenses, and that Isabella was actually penniless. The Lords assembled in Parliament set apart for the Queen's use the revenues of Ponthieu and Montreuil, the King having expressed a wish that his "dearest consort Isabella, Queen of England, should be honourably and decently provided with all things necessary for her chamber, and all expenses for jewels, gifts, and every other requisite." But for the King's own use no supplies were granted till he had given his consent to the banishment of his favourite beyond the seas; having secured the money, the King evaded his promise by making Gaveston governor of Ireland, and it must be owned that he filled the post with ability.

This unprincipled favourite was a very handsome young man, skilled in all knightly exercises and with most courtly manners; but what most attracted and amused the King and gave offence to the nobles, was Gaveston's keen and ready wit. He nicknamed all the chief nobles according to their peculiarities or defects, and mimicked their speech and manners for the King's diversion.

Before a year had passed Gaveston had returned to England to attend a tournament at Wallingford. He behaved with the same haughty insolence as before, and the barons found further cause of grievance in the large and magnificent retinue of foreigners which he kept up.

Chief in the party of discontent was the Earl of Lancaster, who, through his mother, was uncle to the Queen no less than the King, and in fear of him and of the French influence by which he was backed, Edward was forced to send Gaveston away again, this time to Guienne. Before he left, Edward lavished on him all the jewels he could lay hands on, not excepting the trinkets which his wife had at different times presented to him as tokens of regard. Isabella was just at the age to feel most acutely these personal slights, and she never forgave them.

Gaveston remained abroad till 1312, and during his absence there was a period of national tranquillity, the Queen being strong in the public regard, with the reputation of a gentle and good woman, peculiarly humane and charitable to the poor. On Gaveston's return she made no effort to conceal her dislike to him, and he treated her with insult. From this time the evil side of her nature rapidly developed, and we shall have to note that no man who affronted her ever escaped unpunished—not even the King himself. Her appeals to the King against Gaveston were utterly disregarded by him, and the Queen wrote home, bitterly complaining that she was the most wretched of wives, and accusing Gaveston as the cause of all her troubles, by alienating King Edward's affection from her, and leading him into improper company. Edward, too, wrote frequently to his father-in-law, Philip of France, justifying his conduct with regard to Gaveston, but of so little importance did he consider the young Queen that her name in connection with the matter is never once mentioned in the whole correspondence. We are indebted for these and many other details of events at this period to Rymer's "*Foedera*."

So strong was the feeling against Gaveston that the nobles, immediately on his second return, took up arms against the monarch to limit the power of the throne, disgrace Gaveston, and for the future guard against the appointment to high office of such a worthless character, for Edward's latest folly was to make his favourite Chief Secretary of State.

The King and Gaveston fled to York, carrying the unwilling Queen with them, but the

barons pursuing, they removed to Newcastle. Hearing that the victorious army of the nobles had entered York, the King and Gaveston, with shameful cowardice, abandoned the Queen and took ship to Scarborough. Isabella was much alarmed at being left alone; she retired to Tynemouth, where she received a reassuring message from the Earl of Lancaster, the leader of the rebels, that she would be unmolested, "their sole object being to secure the person of the favourite." And this they soon succeeded in doing. The King left Gaveston in Scarborough, while he went southward, hoping to raise forces in the midland counties; but Scarborough, although a strong castle, had no store of provisions, so, when the barons stormed the place Gaveston yielded, on the condition that he should be allowed a fair trial and an interview with the King previous to it. This Lancaster promised on behalf of the barons, but when once the hated courtier was in their hands they agreed to rid the world at once of a man who had done so much mischief, and after a mock trial he was beheaded at Blacklow Hill, near Warwick. To complete the satisfaction of the barons, much valuable jewellery, the property of the luckless favourite, fell into their hands. There can be no doubt that Isabella sympathised with the insurgents and applauded their work, but we have no proof that she was in any way connected with Gaveston's death.

In November of this year (1312), Isabella gave birth to a prince, the afterwards famous Edward III. The event took place at Windsor, and the heir took his surname from the town. Peace was now established, and the King, who had continued very gloomy and sullen since the death of Gaveston, brightened on the birth of a heir, a fine, vigorous, and promising infant. Through the Queen's mediation a free pardon to all insurgents was promised, and as soon as Isabella was well enough to travel, the King and Queen paid a visit of pleasure to the Continent, going first to Aquitaine and then to Paris, where Philip received them with due honour and the customary festivities.

For the ten succeeding years, during which she became the mother of several children, Isabella was happy in retaining a strong influence over the King. The amnesty granted to the rebel lords, in the autumn of 1313, expressly states that "this pardon and remission is granted by the King through the prayers of his dearest companion, Isabella, Queen of England."

But the country did not long remain at peace: Robert Bruce, King of Scotland, besieged Stirling, and Edward II. advancing to its relief, experienced the disastrous defeat of Bannockburn, which practically secured the freedom of Scotland. In 1319 Bruce besieged Berwick, and Isabella and her children accompanied Edward northward. During the campaign she lived at Brotherton, in Yorkshire, the residence of Marguerite while Edward I. was in Scotland. This place was then a perfectly safe retreat, but now the

Scots easily eluded the weak and vacillating King, who commanded the English army, and they made deadly inroads on the north of England. Once Douglas and his followers were within a few miles of the Queen, who only saved herself by immediate flight into York, and even from there she removed to Nottingham as soon as possible.

Gaveston had not been dead many years before the King found a fresh object for his affections. His choice fell on Hugh Despenser, a young man, brave, amiable, and accomplished, of ancient descent, but poor, and a dependent of the Earl of Lancaster, who little thought when introducing him at court that he was taking the first step towards his own ruin, that of the chief barons of the land, and finally of the King himself. Edward was, as it were, bewitched by this new *protégé*, heaped immense riches on him, and gave his father patronage and property almost without limit. He also gave Hugh in marriage Eleanor, the daughter of the late Earl of Gloucester, with the large estates to which she was a co-heiress. Her father had been the chief of the lords-marchers of Wales, but in the long minority following his death the bellicose family of the Mortimers had acquired the ascendancy Gloucester formerly enjoyed. The marchers conceived for the Despensers an intensity of hate and jealousy equal to that which they had borne to Gaveston, and when the new lord-marcher attempted to assume his rights the nobles rose, made a raid into Eleanor's estates with fire and sword, did immense damage in a very short space of time, and then demanded of the King the instant dismissal and banishment of both the Despensers. To this Edward was obliged to consent.

Some account of the origin of this civil war has been given to enable the reader better to understand the state of affairs when the following incident occurred. In this same year, 1321, the Queen, while on pilgrimage to the shrine of Thomas à Becket, at Canterbury, demanded of Lady Badlesmere, the wife of the castellan, admittance to her own castle of Leeds, in Kent. Badlesmere was from home at the time, taking part in the rebellion, and his wife took upon herself to send this insulting reply: "That the Queen might seek some other lodging, for she would not admit anyone into the castle without an order from her lord;" and when the Queen and her suite approached the gates they were met by a shower of arrows. Badlesmere was himself rash enough to write an insolent letter to Isabella, supporting his wife's action; but he little knew what kind of woman he had to deal with in the hitherto gentle Queen—the sleeping tigress within her was roused, and athirst for blood. She complained vehemently to the King that she had been grossly insulted, and that six of her royal escort had been slain. The ease-loving Edward was compelled to vindicate his own honour and that of the Queen. "A general muster of all persons between the ages of sixteen and sixty was called to attend the King in an expedi-

tion against Leeds Castle." The Londoners willingly joined the cause of the Queen, who was still popular among them. Lady Badlesmere, undoubtedly a brave woman, feeling secure in her amply-provisioned castle, defied the royalists, counting on the speedy help of the associated barons; but they, with the Earl of Lancaster at their head, now remained neutral. The Queen, who had always befriended these barons against their common enemy, the Despensers, was piqued at their non-interference for her now. Leeds Castle was taken, and the seneschal of the castle, Walter Colepepper, and eleven of the garrison, were hanged before its gates. Lady Badlesmere herself suffered a lengthy imprisonment in the Tower.

The Queen now most unwisely urged Edward to use his successful arms against the hostile barons, but his compliance produced unforeseen results. The Queen not only lost the favour of the barons, but her enemies the Despensers reappeared at court. Urged by the spirit of vengeance, they seconded the Queen's wishes, though from very different motives, and Edward pursuing the barons, defeated them in a battle at Boroughbridge, took prisoner Lancaster with ninety-five of his followers; and after a pretence of trial by a few peers, the Earl was beheaded at Pontefract. Isabella is not directly answerable for this deed, as she had retired to the Tower of London to await the birth of her daughter, Joanna de la Tour, and did not know of her uncle's capture till after he was dead.

We have now to relate the sadder part of this Queen's story. Among the state prisoners in the Tower at this time was Roger Mortimer, one of the foremost among the lords-marchers, lying under sentence of death for his attack on the estates of the Despensers before their banishment. It is not clear how this unprincipled man first obtained access to the presence of the Queen, who so fortunately for him had taken up her abode in the Tower. Probably she had known him previously, but their mutual hatred of the Despensers struck the first chord of sympathy between them. Mortimer was handsome and clever, and as his wife was a Frenchwoman he could doubtless converse easily in Isabella's native tongue, and possessed more refinement and culture than was usually to be met with among the English nobility. Whatever his attractions in her eyes, he soon acquired that fatal fascination which proved the ruin of both. Isabella persuaded the King to grant this important criminal a reprieve, but he was not released, and in the next year, 1323, on the discovery of a treasonable scheme of his planning to seize not only the Tower but Windsor and Wallingford, he was again condemned to death. Yet, through the good offices of the Queen's staunch adherents, Adam Orleton, and Beck, Bishop of Durham, he again obtained a reprieve and finally the means of escape. The valet of Legrave, keeper of the Tower, drugged the drink given by the Queen to the guards, and while they

were asleep Mortimer got through a hole he had secretly made between his cell and the kitchen of the state apartments. Ascending the wide chimney, he gained the palace roof and let himself down by a rope ladder to the river, where a boat was in readiness to convey him to the opposite shore. In a short time he landed safely in France and made his way to Paris.

Meanwhile King Edward, greatly annoyed at his escape, sought him on his own estates, little thinking that "the lady his companion," had she been so minded, could have revealed the whereabouts of the fugitive.

Isabella, when once Mortimer was safe beyond seas, made a direct and open attack on the Despensers, her own enemies and his. She declared the Earl of Lancaster, against whom she herself had urged the King to take up arms, to be a saint and martyr, sacrificed to the hatred of the Despensers. The Despensers, with a hearty return of ill-will, induced Edward to deprive the Queen of a large part of her revenues. She then appealed to her brother, Charles le Bel, who now occupied the French throne, setting forth all her wrongs with the assertion "that she was held in no higher consideration than a servant in the palace of the King her husband." Charles, requiring no second excuse for invading Edward's continental dominions, made an attack on Guienne, on some plea connected with the rendering of homage. The King of England was not prepared for war, so he gladly listened to Isabella's artful proposal that she should go out as mediatrix between her husband and brother, consenting the more readily that for some time past, by reason of frequent quarrels, the royal pair had lived apart. The Queen thus made her escape to France, which was the object of all her schemes. Quickly arranging matters with her brother, she requested the King to allow Prince Edward to join her, in order to satisfy the French monarch, by doing personal homage to him for the duchy of Guienne and the earldom of Ponthieu. The Prince, now thirteen years of age, came to Paris with two bishops and a large retinue, and having secured the heir, Isabella threw off the mask, openly maintained the most scandalous connection with Mortimer, and refused to return to England notwithstanding the entreaties of her husband. The King's letters at this time to Isabella, her son, and brother, were of the most earnest, reasonable character, but the Queen, who at first delayed in Paris on the plea of arranging the details of the treaty between the monarchs, now declared that "it was the intention of the Despensers to put her to death if she returned to England," and Charles wrote to Edward "that he could not permit her to return to him unless guaranteed from the evil meditated against her by her enemies." Later, Isabella demanded the dismissal of the favourites, declaring that she dared not trust herself within their reach; that the King could afford her no protection against them, for

they openly disregarded his most positive commands; that they only wanted to secure her in order to put her to death. This plea against her husband was quite sanctioned by the general opinion of the people of England, who held in the utmost contempt the King's weak slavery to his favourites. By these means Isabella kept the Prince with her, and not only continued to set Edward's entreaties at defiance, but entered into a marriage contract for her son with the daughter of the Count of Hainault, although she knew that Edward had long been in treaty for the hand of the Infanta Eleanora of Arragon, and that a dispensation from the Pope was already applied for. The Queen had no shadow of a right to move at all in the matter without the authority of the King and Parliament, but one secret of her conduct was that the Count of Hainault offered to pay the lady's dowry in advance, and the Queen was greatly in need of funds. Her brother, the King of France, hearing, perhaps for the first time, of his sister's disgraceful relations with Mortimer, from henceforth withdrew from her his countenance and support. She was forced to leave Paris as secretly as possible, and fly to the friendly court of Hainault. There she figured as a heroine of romance—the distressed Queen, taking refuge from a tyrannical husband. The beautiful lady wore a dejected manner and poured out her griefs in every ear. She was conducted to Valenciennes with great state, and there feasted eight days with much honour; then the Count's brother, John of Hainault, very young and enthusiastic, kneeling on one knee, said to her, "Lady, see here your knight; I will do everything in my power to conduct you safely to England with your son, and restore you to your rank, with the assistance of your friends in those parts; and I will risk my life on the adventure for your sake, and we shall have a sufficient armed force, if it please God, without fearing any danger from the King of France."

This chivalrous devotion to the cause of a distressed relation was not altogether disinterested; the valiant knight did not conceal from his brother the Count that he thought it a fine opportunity for making his fortune. He declared that "he believed God had inspired him with a desire for this enterprise for his advancement." Collecting under her banner many English exiles, as well as mercenaries, Isabella embarked at Dort, with Roger Mortimer as commander of the English and Sir John Hainault at the head of the foreigners. The total force amounted to 2,757 soldiers, but the number was much reduced by the wreck of some of the vessels in crossing. Driven before a storm, the ships sighted a part of the coast at first unknown, but which proved to be near Harwich. Froissart gives these details: "The Queen being safely got on shore, her knights and attendants made her a house with four carpets, open in the front, where they kindled her a great fire of the pieces of wreck. Meantime the Flemish sailors got on shore before midnight all the

horses and arms, and then the ships that survived the storm sailed (the wind being favourable) to the opposite coast."

The first nobleman to welcome Isabella was Thomas of Brotherton, the King's brother ; and Henry of Lancaster, and many other lords and barons, forgetting her offences against them in their still deeper hatred of the Despensers, flocked to her standard. So general was the feeling of discontent with the King and his favourites that the nation rose almost *en masse* to assist the injured and persecuted Queen, the infamy of her real character, so notorious in France, being as yet quite unknown in England.

King Edward in London was too frightened by the news which hourly reached him to make any attempt at opposition. Having proscribed all who appeared in arms against him except the Queen and Prince Edward, and offered a reward for Mortimer's head, he fled with the Despensers and a few followers to Bristol, quickly followed by the Queen and her army.

As Isabella neared London the citizens rose in her favour. They seized the Tower, left in charge of Stapleton, Bishop of Exeter, made the King's boy son, John of Eltham, keeper of the city, and liberated all the prisoners. The unfortunate Bishop forfeited his head, which was presented to the Queen ; he had been marked by her and Mortimer as a subject for vengeance, since he had returned from Paris to inform the King of the evil life his wife was leading. Arrived at Bristol, the citizens opened their gates to the Queen, and Edward took refuge in the castle. There he was the unwilling witness of the execution of the elder Despenser, whom the townspeople had given up to the Queen. The old man was past ninety, but Isabella, with her barons assembled, declared that she would "see that law and justice was executed on him for his evil deeds," and he was instantly hanged in his armour beneath the castle walls.

The King was most anxious to escape to Ireland, and fled in a boat from the back of the castle for the Welsh shore ; but he was soon seized with his companions, the younger Hugh Despenser and Baldroch, Bishop of Norwich, in the woods of Llantressan, and helpless and hopeless he immediately surrendered himself, and was led in triumph to the Queen as her prisoner.

Isabella returned to London, leading her husband a despised and degraded captive in her train. Hugh Despenser, having witnessed from the walls of Bristol the dreadful death of his father, lost all spirit and refused to take food. By order of Sir Thomas Wager, the marshal of the Queen's army, he was tied to the sorriest steed that could be found, and attired in his dress of state emblazoned with the arms of Gloucester, was led as far as Hereford, with trumpets and cymbals sounding before him, that all might notice and deride

him. At Hereford he was so weak and ill that the Queen feared he might die on the road if taken to London, so he was brought to trial, crowned with nettles, and then put to death with diabolical cruelty in the presence of the Queen herself. Here also some more of the King's adherents suffered, to satisfy the cruelty of Mortimer, who now paraded the favours of his royal mistress before the public. When the Queen arrived in London vast crowds came out to meet and welcome her and offer her costly gifts. For the moment she was the popular idol, and could do no wrong, but when once power was in her hands she indulged in its exercise with a recklessness of honour, nature, or feeling which slowly but surely stripped the bandage from the eyes of her deluded subjects, and showed her in her true character, a monster of cruelty and vice in the shape of a lovely woman.

In December, 1326, a Parliament met at Westminster, by which Edward II. was formally deposed and his son elected in his stead. The Prince was immediately afterwards proclaimed King in Westminster Hall by the title of Edward III.

On learning the news of this action of her own party, the hypocritical Queen burst into a flood of tears. The noble young Prince, who was with her at the time, with perfect faith in his mother's sincerity, declared he would not wear the crown till his father should resign it to him voluntarily. This was not quite what Isabella had calculated on; but the King had already given up the great seal to her delegate, Adam Orleton, the unprincipled Bishop of Hereford, and the same agent, with eleven other commissioners, was now sent to Kenilworth Castle, where Edward was kept in honourable captivity by Henry of Lancaster, to require the King to resign his crown, sceptre, and orb for the use of his son. The King meekly complied, but in evident agony and prostration of mind, further increased by the vile insults and abuse heaped upon him by the cruel Orleton. Edward III. was crowned at Westminster, January, 1326, the Queen affecting to weep and lament during the whole ceremony; but nevertheless she was foremost in all the festivities, which lasted from Christmas till Twelfth-day. John of Hainault, who, for the greater security of the Queen's party, had remained at court with his mercenaries, now took his leave, Edward, by the advice of his mother, granting him an annuity of four hundred marks, besides many handsome presents.

To render the deposed King still more unpopular, Isabella petitioned the Pope to canonize the beheaded Earl of Lancaster, whom she now pretended she had misunderstood, and whose virtues she greatly praised. Parliament appointed a regency of twelve peers and prelates for the guardianship of the nation and of the young King, who was only fifteen years of age; but Isabella, her paramour Mortimer, and her base creature, Bishop Orleton, seized the reins of government and acted as they pleased. The Queen, with the

sanction of Parliament, applied to her own uses two-thirds of the crown revenues; and when the Scots, emboldened by the disturbed state of England, made an inroad, she was furnished with an excuse to recall her champion, Sir John of Hainault. He and his hired soldiers were received with anything but approval by the Londoners, and we may note that the Queen's popularity now began to wane. Young Edward marched boldly against the invaders, leaving the Queen and Mortimer to enjoy the regal power at home.

All this while the unfortunate King was kept prisoner at Kenilworth Castle, the unnatural wife sending him from time to time trifling presents, and tender inquiries as to his health and comfort, with regrets that Parliament would not permit her to visit him. Edward continually implored the Queen that he might be permitted to see her and her son; and his entire patience and meekness in his afflictions would have touched any heart less savage than the Queen's. But when that "she-wolf of France," as Shakespeare has termed her, became aware that the Earl of Lancaster was beginning to pity the fallen monarch, and inclined to treat him with kindness, she removed him to Corfe Castle, and afterwards to Bristol, in custody of Sir John Maltravers, who deputed two ruffians, Gurney and Ogle, to treat the unhappy prisoner with every indignity and unkindness they could devise. In order that hardship might put an end to his life, they made him travel by night in chilly weather with very little clothing, although he suffered intensely from the cold. From Bristol, on account of the popular feeling in his favour, he was conducted in secret to Berkeley Castle, his keepers employing the most refined cruelties to torture the deposed sovereign. They deprived him of sleep, crowned him with hay in derision, and shaved him in an open field in filthy stagnant water from a ditch. But the end of his sufferings was near at hand. This was in April, 1327, and but a few months later, finding that his constitution withstood all hardships, the Queen gave orders for his secret murder. At dead of night his jailors completed their devilish work by scorching his intestines with a hot iron. But evil will out: his piercing shrieks and screams of anguish startled numbers in the neighbourhood from their sleep, "and they prayed heartily to God to receive his soul, for they understood very well by those cries what the matter meant." Isabella ordered the private burial of the body in Berkeley Castle, allowing it to be publicly known that any who presumed to meddle with the royal remains would suffer heavily for it; but in spite of this threat, the Bishop of Gloucester went boldly to Berkeley Castle in all his state, and as he threw a handsome pall, emblazoned with his own and the church's arms, over the bier, he commanded his followers, "in the name of God and St. Peter, to take up their dear lord and bear him to his burial in the church to which he had given so many pious gifts." Accordingly the royal body was interred in Gloucester Cathedral, and the bishop was well

repaid for his bravery, for as the tide of public feeling turned, the fame of the pretended miracles wrought at King Edward's tomb soon spread, and his shrine became the favourite place of resort for pilgrims, and greatly augmented the wealth of the cathedral and the monks of Gloucester.

After the murder of her husband, Isabella became most unpopular. To distract public attention from the fate of the King she hastened to celebrate with great festivities the marriage of her son and his Hainault bride; but her next move excited general indignation: it was a treaty concluded with Scotland for the marriage of her infant daughter Joanna to the heir of the Scottish throne, then about two years old, and the sale, for twenty thousand pounds, of those claims over the kingdom of Scotland for which the two last kings had shed so much blood. And discontent spread still further when it became known that the money had been pocketed by Mortimer, who had assumed such princely state and bore himself with such insolence that even his own son called him "the king of Folly." He had been created Earl of March, and kept a retinue like a monarch.

After the return of the Queen and her paramour, in July, 1328, from Berwick, where they had been present at the marriage of Princess Joanna with David Bruce, Mortimer conducted himself with greater insolence than ever. When Parliament assembled at Salisbury he brought an army into the town, forced himself into the council-chamber, threatened loss of life and property to any who should oppose his wishes. He carried away the persons of the young King and Queen to Winchester, utterly regardless of the remonstrances of the Earl of Lancaster, their lawful guardian. The princes of the blood royal had for some time been conspicuous by their absence from the council of regency, and now they formed against Mortimer a powerful coalition, including members of all classes.

Civil war was averted for the moment by the intervention of the Archbishop of Canterbury, so Isabella, well aware of the strength of the enemy, with characteristic craft schemed to frustrate its ends by aiming death at each individual. She selected as her first victim the Earl of Kent, and because she knew him to be suffering from remorse at the share he believed himself to have taken in his half-brother's death, she circulated a report that Edward II. was not really dead; and when the unwary earl entrusted a letter he had written to the King to the hands of his supposed custodian at Corfe Castle, desiring his restoration, the Queen caused him to be seized, and, on the evidence of the letter only, convicted of high treason. He was executed at Winchester, where the terror of shedding innocent and royal blood was so great that the executioner stole away from his office, and the unhappy earl was left standing on the scaffold from noon till five in the

afternoon before anyone could be found to perform the odious deed. It was at length done by a condemned felon on receiving his pardon for the act.

But Isabella's career as a murderess was well-nigh over. In 1329 her son had occasion to visit France in connection with his famous claim to the French throne in right of the Queen. While in that country he learned much about his mother's doings, which had been carefully kept from his ears in England, so that on his return he was prepared to listen to his barons, who, incensed beyond endurance at the arrogance of Mortimer, and at the infamous crimes in which he was daily indulging with the abandoned Queen, opened the eyes of the gallant young King to the dishonour his mother was bringing on him. A Parliament was summoned to meet at Nottingham. Mortimer's position is thus described by an old chronicler: "No man durst name him other than Earl of March, and a greater rout of men waited at his heels than on the King's person. He would suffer the King to rise to him, and would walk with him equally, step by step, and cheek by cheek, never preferring the King, but would go foremost himself with his officers." Queen Isabella was lodged in the "old tower" of the castle at Nottingham, while Mortimer and his strong band of followers occupied another part of the building. But Edward discovered the subterranean passage by which Mortimer passed to the Queen's apartments, and following him one night with a few faithful adherents, he seized the villain in Isabella's chamber, and had him forthwith conveyed to the Tower of London. A few hours after his arrival he was taken to Tyburn and there hanged, the first criminal that suffered on that notorious gallows. His body was exposed, by command of the King, for two days, and then buried in the Church of the Grey Friars, to which the Queen had in happier years made liberal contribution.

King Edward henceforward took the government into his own hands. He at once reduced the Queen's income to one thousand pounds per annum, and "by the advice of his council ordered his mother to be confined in a goodly castle, and gave her plenty of ladies to wait upon her, as well as knights and squires of honour. He forbade her to show herself abroad except at certain times, and when any shows were exhibited in the court of the castle."

From this time Isabella's life was uneventful: she continued a state prisoner at Castle-Rising, in Norfolk, for twenty-seven years, till her death in 1358, at the age of sixty-three. Her son, who had spared himself no less than her in sparing the scandal of a public trial, treated her kindly to the end, always attributing her crimes to the evil influence of Mortimer, visiting her at least once a year, and showing every attention to her personal comfort.

She was buried, according to her own request, in the church of the Grey Friars, Newgate, beside the remains of Mortimer, and, with a curious mixture of hypocrisy and sentiment, at her express desire the heart of her murdered husband was laid upon her breast! In the same church, and very probably upon the same day, were interred the remains of her virtuous daughter Joanna, who had been the faithful wife of the unlucky David Bruce of Scotland. A handsome alabaster tomb was erected over Isabella, but it is in vain to seek it now: the site of the Grey Friars church is occupied by Christ's Hospital School.



PHILIPPA OF HAINAULT.

Consort of Edward 3^d

XI.

PHILIPPA OF HAINAULT.

THE virtuous and eminently useful queen of Edward III., whose life and character strongly resembles that of Matilda of Flanders, came from very nearly the same part of the world. The province of Hainault, as marked on modern maps, is merely an inland division in the south of the kingdom of Belgium, bordering on France, and consisting of flat, well-cultivated plains, and to the south of them the romantic Forest of the Ardennes; but the northern frontier of France now runs east and west through what were the dominions of Philippa's father, William the Good, ruler of independent Hainault, and his capital, Valenciennes, is situate some distance south of the Belgian present border.

Philippa's mother, Jane of Valois, was daughter of Charles of France, Count of Valois, and cousin of Isabella, the queen of Edward II. of England; and it was on account of this cousinship that a marriage between Edward III. and a princess of Hainault was first contemplated. When the infamous Isabella was driven from Paris, by her brother the French king, she took refuge with the Count of Hainault, who received her kindly, partly because his wife was her cousin and partly because to give shelter and assistance to a persecuted queen, as he believed her to be, was likely to advantage his state and family politically and socially. So, in the year 1326, at Valenciennes, while his mother was planning with the heads of the family of Hainault an expedition to England to recover her rights, young Edward was brought in contact with the daughters of the Count, Margaret, Philippa, Joanna, and Isabel, and selected the second, then nearly fifteen, and but few months younger than himself, as his special favourite. A contemporary remarks, "Prince Edward paid more court and attention to Philippa than to any of the others, who also conversed with him more frequently, and sought his company oftener, than any of her sisters."

After one short fortnight of social intercourse the young lovers were parted. Edward could not marry without the formal consent of the Estates of the realm of England, nor contract an alliance with Philippa, his second cousin, without a dispensation from the

Holy See. So some time expired before matters could be settled, but finally the deputation sent to Avignon returned with the consent of the Pope for Edward III. of England "to marry a daughter of the nobleman William, Count of Hainault, Holland, and Zealand, and Lord of Friesland," and the young King succeeded without difficulty in obtaining the permission of Parliament to his union with Philippa. It was well for the Count of Hainault that Edward desired marriage with the lady on her own merits, for he had paid her dowry—a large sum of money—in advance into the hands of Queen Isabella, who no doubt spent it for her own purposes, as no documentary record has been preserved either of its amount or of the uses to which it was put.

The young King Edward was unable to meet his bride in person and welcome her to her new home, because the disturbed state of Scotland and wars on the Border demanded his presence in the North, but he ordered the "Constable of Dover to receive and welcome into his kingdom that noble person William, Count of Hainault, with the illustrious damsel Philippa, his daughter; and he charged all and singular his nobility and people of the counties through which the Count, damsel, and familiars might pass, to do them honour and give them dutiful aid." Philippa had already been married by procuration before leaving Valenciennes; she crossed the sea from Wissant to Dover, and thence proceeded to London. Here she arrived at the close of 1327, loudly welcomed by the citizens, who were delighted to behold the wealth and splendour of her large retinue; but though the Londoners held high holiday for three whole weeks, Philippa remained with them but two nights, and then hastened to York, where Edward was eagerly expecting her. Here the nuptials were celebrated in January, 1328, with much pomp. Edward ordered an assembly of the Council and of Parliament, as well as of the principal nobility. Still it must be confessed that the train of the bride's opulent father, and the attendance of one hundred nobles from Scotland, come to arrange the terms of a treaty of peace, formed a very important part of the bridal display, for, from the beginning of his career to its close, the illustrious conqueror, Edward, was always in want of money. In vain he infringed the rights of property, systematised plunder under the title of purveyance; taxed, begged, borrowed, stole; pawned even his own person to his creditors—still the mighty monarch and his hungry court seem always to have been half-clothed and half-fed.

The queen-mother, Isabella, and her paramour, still kept control of the kingdom and its finances, but, nevertheless, one of Edward's first acts on his marriage was to begin to build for his dear wife a residence in the Isle of Sheppey, which should be a convenient port of embarkation when she desired to visit her relations on the Continent. The ruins of a Saxon castle, called Kyngborough, formed the foundation, but the ever-shifting

ground in that bed of mud and sand has almost entirely buried the never-completed building; yet its name, Queenborough, is still familiar to us as the English port of the route to the Continent by way of Flushing.

The retired palace of Woodstock was chosen by Philippa as her favourite residence in the early part of her married life. Here, in June, 1330, the eldest of her numerous family, Edward, the Black Prince, was born. The King and Queen were much delighted with this son and heir; contrary to all precedent, Philippa insisted on nourishing at her own breast this infant, who from the first gave promise of the beauty and strength which afterwards won him so much fame. And well might the young parents expect a right princely son, for Edward was a fine, strong man, and his consort, although not a beauty according to classic mould, was tall and commanding in appearance, with a pleasant, sensible face; the breadth of countenance betrayed the Dutch origin, but she possessed the beautiful, brilliant complexion for which her countrywomen were noted.

And now the royal heralds passed through the country announcing a grand tournament to be held in London in honour of the birth of the Prince. As was usual at these military sports, a number of combatants assembled with the object of exhibiting their courage, prowess, and skill in the use of arms. The open space selected was a part of Cheapside; intending combatants hung up their armorial shields on the trees, tents, and pavilions round the arena for inspection, to show that they were worthy candidates for the honour of contending in the lists in respect of noble birth, military prowess, and unspotted character. There were thirteen knights on each side, the object of the sport being for either party, starting from the extreme end of the lists, to meet their opponents in the middle and unhorse as many of them as possible. But the fight was not all over at the first shock. Again and again, with uplifted spear, would the knights hurl themselves against their antagonists, and many of those unhorsed would continue the struggle on foot. The weapons—sword and spear—were blunted, and many and minute were the regulations instituted to diminish the danger; but the ladies in the temporary tower erected for their accommodation must have found the sport breathlessly exciting. On this occasion an accident occurred to what we may call the “grand stand.” Scarcely had the Queen and the youth and beauty among the ladies of the land taken their seats, than the scaffolding gave way and the building collapsed. It could not have been very lofty, for none of them were hurt, but King Edward flew into a towering passion, and would have hanged all the offending carpenters without delay had not Philippa fallen on her knees and begged him, for her sake, to pardon them.

For nearly two years after his marriage, Edward still remained under the sinister

influence of Isabella and Mortimer, but in the autumn of 1330, when not quite eighteen years of age, he seized his mother's base paramour in Nottingham Castle, and took vengeance in a summary manner on the criminal, condemning him to death without calling one witness—an instance of Edward's lawless disposition and his despotic tendency. How would it have fared with our England if the partner of this impatient and war-loving king had been a gay and careless queen, like some of her predecessors? But Philippa was the reverse of this. Though brought up in wealth and luxury, she came from a people who had earned their prosperity by industry and perseverance. When she looked round on her husband's fine country, and compared it with her own old home, she saw at once where the difference lay. England had great resources, but they wanted developing. Why should the wool grown so extensively here be sent to the Continent, when the English might be taught to manufacture it themselves? Having gained his freedom, Edward's first act was to rid his kingdom of the numerous robbers and marauders, who had multiplied to an insufferable extent during the political troubles and judicial impotence of the last reign, and his next was to restore many of the good old laws and enact fresh ones, to the benefit and satisfaction of his subjects. With these efforts for the internal welfare of his country the ambitious stripling would have rested satisfied, feeling himself now free to gaze around and determine where he would strike his first blow for conquest and for fame. It remained for his wise and virtuous consort to plan and carry out the great improvement of his reign—the introduction of cloth manufacture—which brought to England five centuries of commercial prosperity before the days of steam and machinery.

Philippa's mother, Jane of Valois, a wise and prudent woman, visited her daughter in 1331, and being a great patroness of art and industry in her own land, doubtless aided her daughter in her plans of usefulness, and encouraged Flemish artists to come to England. A letter written by King Edward to John Kempe of Flanders, cloth weaver in wool, states "that if he will come to England with his servants and apprentices of his mystery, and with his goods and chattels, and with such dyers and fullers who may be inclined willingly to accompany him beyond seas and exercise their mysteries in the kingdom of England, they shall have letters of protection and assistance in their settlement."

Kempe established himself at Norwich, and in the eastern counties in a few years sprang up a flourishing colony under the personal patronage of the queen of the land. Philippa frequently came in person to visit Kempe and his workers, choosing the time when Edward paid his customary visits of duty to his unhappy mother at Castle-Rising. To attract the notice of the nobility, for whose use all goods of superior manufacture

were intended, the Queen wisely held tournaments from time to time in this part of the country.

The internal quarrels in Scotland gave Edward a pretext for carrying his arms into that country. He espoused the cause of Baliol, who pretended to the crown in opposition to the rightful successor, David Bruce. For a time the former prince was triumphant and his competitor expelled the kingdom, together with his betrothed wife, Joanna, sister of Edward; but by a sudden rising of the chieftains favourable to David Bruce, Baliol was in his turn compelled to fly. Edward quickly assembled an army to reinstate him on the throne and laid siege to Berwick. Philippa had followed her lord to the north and was safely lodged in Bamborough Castle. Archibald Douglas, the Scottish commander, thinking to distract Edward's attention from the all-important town of Berwick, slipped past the English force and attacked Bamborough. But the result was the reverse of his anticipation. Edward well knew that his beloved Queen would have courage to hold out in the strong fortress, but anxiety on her account aroused his violent temper and he vented it upon the two young sons of the governor of Berwick, whom he held as hostages, caused them to be put to death, and at once attacked the town with such fury that the afflicted father was forced to surrender. From that day Berwick has belonged to England. Edward, soon after, encountered Douglas at Halidown Hill. His victory was complete; thirty thousand of the Scottish army were slain, and the work of Bannockburn undone, for Berwick, Dunbar, Roxburgh, Edinburgh, and all the north-eastern counties were annexed to England, and the claim of our kings to the homage of Scotland again admitted.

But no sooner was Edward returned to his own dominions than the Scots again revolted. He reassembled his army, and once more invaded them; but they declined a battle and withdrew into their highlands. Thus baffled of a contemplated victory, Edward was obliged to retire, after having burnt the houses and desolated the estates of the supporters of Bruce, who rose again immediately after his departure and captured all the English garrisons. The Queen accompanied her husband on this campaign with her infant child Elizabeth, the Princess Royal, recently born at Woodstock.

Each of the two following years, 1335 and 1336, brought an increase to the royal family; Joanna was born at Woodstock and William of Hatfield in a village of Yorkshire; but Philippa was never far from her husband's side during the five years of ineffectual struggle with Scotland, at the close of which Edward yielded to the persuasions of the Count of Flanders that he would find war against France a more profitable undertaking. Indeed, it could scarcely be less so, for, speaking of this monarch's last campaign in the north, Hume says, "He found everything hostile in the kingdom except the spot on which

he was encamped; and though he marched uncontrolled over the Low Countries, the nation was farther than ever from being broken and subdued."

In 1338 Edward crossed over into Flanders with his forces, preparatory to his invasion of France—an invasion which occupied nearly all the remainder of this monarch's life, and did not cease till 1374, plunging the two peoples into those furious wars which begot national antipathies not yet extinct. As the interests of Queen Philippa and her nearest and dearest were deeply concerned in this struggle, we must try to follow out the network of genealogies on which our sovereign founded his claim on the French throne.

Philip IV. of France, surnamed the Fair, who was the maternal grandfather of Edward, left three sons, each of whom in his turn reigned for a brief time; their names were Louis le Hutin, Philip le Long, and Charles le Bel. The last of these three kings, all of whom were Edward's uncles, died in 1318, leaving no sons, but two daughters. Thus was extinguished the direct male line of the elder branch of the Capets, and from this failure Edward originated his claim, as the *grandson* of Philip the Fair. But the *nephew* of this sovereign pretended a prior right to it in virtue of his male descent, and appealed to the Salique law to justify his demand. The nation admitted the validity of his plea, and with universal assent Philip of Valois was crowned. For ten years Edward remained passive; the law was against him both ways. If he did not recognise Philip, then the daughters of his uncles (and there were several of them) took precedence of him. At last a bright idea suggested itself. The Salique law forbade a woman to occupy the throne, but it stipulated nothing against her transmitting her claim to a son; therefore, as son and representative of his mother Isabella, daughter of Philip the Fair, he was now the rightful king of France. It mattered nothing that there was a serious flaw in Edward's reasoning, namely, that if Isabella possessed no claim, she could not possibly transmit one—here was a pretext for invading France and satisfying his ambition.

Philippa accompanied her lord to the Continent, and during his first campaign resided at Antwerp, where she gave birth to a third son, Lionel, afterwards Duke of Clarence, and famed for his great strength and unusual height. The next year, 1339, on returning to England, Philippa was warmly welcomed by her wool manufacturers at Norwich, while Edward visited his mother at Castle-Rising. The summer was again passed on the Continent; the Queen stayed at Ghent, where she gave birth to John, surnamed Gaunt (a corruption of Ghent), on the same day that Edward gained the naval battle of Sluys, memorable as the first occasion on which the French were defeated at sea by their English neighbours. This year witnessed a temporary cessation of hostilities. Philippa's mother came to Tournay and joined with her daughter in imploring each party in turn to abstain

from shedding Christian blood in so unchristian a cause, the claim being so doubtful and the combatants so closely related. Edward yielded to their entreaties the more readily that he had not only emptied his exchequer, but had pawned all his own and the Queen's jewellery, and was on all sides beset by creditors.

Edward III. was certainly a kind and affectionate husband, and reposed a well-deserved confidence in his wise and prudent Queen, but about this period he caused her some pangs of jealousy. One of the King's valiant knights, created by him Earl of Salisbury, was captured in the French war. Wark Castle, of which he was castellan, was besieged by David, King of Scotland, his beautiful young countess being in charge of it. When word of the siege was brought to Edward, who was encamped near Berwick, he immediately hastened to her relief. Froissart gives the following details of the King's love affair :—

“The moment the Countess heard of the King's approach she ordered all the gates to be thrown open, and went to meet him most richly dressed, insomuch that no one could look at her but with wonder and admiration at her noble deportment, great beauty, and affability of behaviour. Every one was delighted with her, but the King could not take his eyes off from her, so that a fine spark of love struck upon his breast, which lasted a long time, for he did not believe that the whole world produced any other lady worthy of being loved. They entered the castle hand in hand. King Edward kept his eyes so fixed upon the Countess that the gentle dame was quite abashed. After he had sufficiently examined his apartment he retired to a window, and leaning on it, fell into a profound reverie. The Countess left him to order dinner to be made ready and the tables set ; likewise to welcome the knights and lords who accompanied the King. When she had given all the orders to her servants she thought needful, she returned with a cheerful countenance to King Edward and said, ‘Dear sir, what are you musing on? Such meditation is not proper for you, saving your grace. You ought to be of good cheer, and feast with your friends, to give them more pleasure, and leave off pondering ; for God has been very bountiful to you in your undertakings, so that you are the most feared and renowned prince in Christendom. If the King of Scotland have vexed you with the mischiefs he hath done in your kingdom, you will speedily be able to make reprisals in his dominions. Therefore come, if it please you, into the hall, for dinner will soon be served.’ ‘Oh, sweet lady!’ said King Edward, ‘there be other things which touch my heart and lie heavy there than you talk of. For in good truth, your beauteous mien and the perfections of your face and behaviour have wholly overcome me, and so deeply impress my heart that my happiness wholly depends on meeting a return to my flame, which no denial from you can ever extinguish.’ ‘Oh, my dread lord,’ replied the Countess, ‘do not amuse yourself by laughing at me, and

trying to tempt me, for I cannot believe you are in earnest as to what you have just said. Is it likely that so noble and gallant a prince as you would ever think of dishonouring either me or my husband, a valiant knight who has served you so faithfully, and who now lies in a doleful prison on your account?' The virtuous lady then quitted the King, who was astonished at her words.

"She went into the hall to hasten dinner; afterwards she approached the King's chamber attended by all her knights, and said to him, 'My lord King, your knights are all waiting for you to wash their hands, for they, as well as yourself, have fasted too long.' King Edward came to the hall, but he ate very little, and was the whole time pensive, casting his eyes, whenever he had the opportunity, on the Countess. Such behaviour surprised his friends, for they had never seen the like before in their King. They supposed it was his chagrin at the departure of the Scots without a battle. The King remained at the castle the whole day, without knowing what to do with himself. Thus did he pass that day and a sleepless night, debating the matter within his own breast. At daybreak he rose, raised his camp, and made ready to follow the Scots. Upon taking leave of the Countess he said, 'My dear lady, God preserve you safe till I return; and I pray that you will think well of what I have said, and have the goodness to give me a different answer.' 'My gracious liege,' replied the Countess, 'God in His infinite goodness preserve you, and drive from your heart such villainous thoughts, for I am and ever shall be ready to serve you, but only in what is consistent with my honour and with yours.'"

Owing to the virtuous principles exhibited by the object of his passion, Edward soon recovered his right mind sufficiently to desire the return of the Countess's captive husband, for it was arranged "that David, King of Scotland, should undertake a negociation with his ally, the King of France, to exchange the Earl of Moray, a prisoner of King Edward, for the Earl of Salisbury."

On St. George's Day, 1343, Edward held the first chapter of the celebrated Order of the Garter at Windsor. It is said to have been devised for the purpose of attracting to the King's party such soldiers of fortune as might be likely to aid in asserting the claim which he was then making to the throne of France, and intended as an imitation of King Arthur's Round Table. The round table was erected at Windsor, and the knights and nobles, who were invited from all parts of the world, were exercised at tilts and tournaments, as a preparation for the magnificent feasts that were set before them. The story runs that the Countess of Salisbury let fall her garter when dancing with the King, and that the King picked it up and tied it round his own leg; but that, observing the jealous

glances of Queen Philippa, he restored it to the fair owner with the exclamation, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*," which was adopted as the motto of the new order; and the gallant Edward associated a dame with each of its knights; the badge to be worn by the lady on the left arm and by the gentleman on the left leg.

Whether or no the tale is true, the Countess was certainly the heroine of the hour. We cannot do better than let Froissart give his version of the part she took in the festivities. He says: "King Edward commanded all his own lords and knights should be there without fail, and he expressly ordered the Earl of Salisbury to bring the lady his wife, with as many young ladies as she could collect to attend her. The Earl very cheerfully complied with the King's request, for he thought no evil, and his good lady dared not say nay. She came, however, much against her will, for she guessed the reason which made the King so earnest for her attendance, but was afraid to discover it to her husband, intending by her conduct and conversation to make the King change his opinion. All the ladies and damsels who assisted at the first convocation of the Order of the Garter came superbly attired, excepting the Countess of Salisbury, who attended the festival dressed as plainly as possible. She did not wish the King to admire her, for she had no intention to obey him in anything evil that might tend to the dishonour of her dear lord."

As we have already, more than once, quoted Froissart, some notice of this illustrious poet and historian may interest the reader, for to his charming "*Chronicles*" we are indebted for the many interesting details connected with the life of his patroness, good Queen Philippa.

He was born and educated in Valenciennes, and although some years younger than the lady who became his patroness, he had ample opportunity of gathering from eye-witnesses the knowledge by which he could add those touches which make the history of his own time so vivid and lifelike. Everywhere the gay, poetical, quick-witted and observant Frenchman was welcomed and honoured; and as before beginning to write he spent much time travelling in the countries whose history he was about to immortalise in his great work, we may be sure he neglected no opportunity of gathering minute and trustworthy information; at the same time we must not lose sight of the fact that Froissart was a courtier, and may sometimes allow love and admiration for his royal benefactress to magnify her virtues and blind his eyes to her faults.

The year 1346 saw King Edward back in France, renewing the war with Philip of Valois; he was now attended by the knights of the newly established Order of the Garter, and had with him his eldest son, Edward. The siege of Calais occupied the

whole of this campaign, and during it was fought the important battle of Crecy, at which the Black Prince won his fame.

To create a diversion in favour of France, David of Scotland advanced into England a fortnight after the battle of Crecy, and burned the suburbs of York. The regency of England had been left in the hands of Queen Philippa, though the King had associated with her in the government little Prince Lionel, a child of eight, that he might represent his august father by sitting on the English throne at the opening of Parliament. But it was to the Queen that the nation looked for guidance in the day of peril, and she did not fail her husband's people. It is again Froissart who writes: "The Queen of England, who was very anxious to defend the kingdom, in order to show that she was in earnest about it, came herself to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. She took up her residence there, to be near her militia. On the morrow, the King of Scots, with full forty thousand men, advanced within three short miles of the town of Newcastle; he sent to inform the Queen that if her men were willing to come forth from the town, he would wait and give them battle. Philippa answered that she accepted his offer, and that her barons would risk their lives for the realm of their lord the King. The Queen's army drew up in order of battle at Neville's Cross. Philippa advanced among them mounted on her white charger, entreated her men to do their duty well in defending the honour of their lord the King, and urged them for the love of God to fight manfully. They promised that they would acquit themselves loyally to the utmost of their power, and perhaps even better than if the King had been there in person. The Queen then took leave of them, and recommended them to the protection of God and St. George.

"When the Queen of England (who had tarried in Newcastle while the battle was fought) heard that her army had gained the victory, she mounted on her white charger and went to the battlefield. She was informed on the way that the King of Scots was a prisoner of a squire named John Copeland, who had rode off with him, no one knew whither. The Queen ordered him to be sought out, and told that he had done that which was not agreeable to her, in carrying off his prisoner without leave. All the rest of the day the Queen and her army remained on the battlefield they had won, and then returned to Newcastle for the night."

Philippa wrote herself next day to Copeland, commanding him to give up King David to her. His haughty reply savours more of the independence of the feudal times than of knightly chivalry. He bid her messenger "tell the Queen she might depend on his taking good care of King David, but that he would not give up his royal prisoner to woman or child, but only to his own lord, King Edward, for to him he had sworn allegiance and not

to any woman.” Philippa, somewhat indignant, sent a letter of complaint to the King, who on receipt of it commanded the offending squire to appear before him at Calais, but his gracious greeting exhibits more admiration for the brave soldier than disapproval of his after conduct. “When the King of England saw the squire, he took him by the hand, saying, ‘Ha! welcome, my squire, who by thy valour hast captured mine adversary, the King of Scots!’ John Copeland fell on one knee and replied, ‘If God, out of His great kindness, has given me the King of Scotland, and permitted me to conquer him in arms, no one ought to be jealous of it; for God can, if he pleases, send his grace to a poor squire as well as to a great lord. Sire, do not take it amiss if I did not surrender King David to the orders of my lady Queen, for I hold my lands of you, and not of her, and my oath is to you, and not to her, unless indeed through choice.’ Then King Edward answered, ‘John, the loyal service you have done us, and our esteem for your valour, is so great that it may well serve you as an excuse, and shame fall on all those who bear you any ill-will. You will now return home and take your prisoner, the King of Scotland, and convey him to my wife; and by way of remuneration I assign lands as near your house as you can choose them, to the amount of £500 a year, for you and your heirs.’ John Copeland left Calais the third day after his arrival, and returned to England. When he was come home he assembled his friends and neighbours, and in company with them, took the King of Scots, and carried him to Philippa, and made such excuses that she was satisfied.” Thus did the wise Queen, for the sake of the general weal, repress any feelings of resentment which she might naturally have cherished against one who had so wounded her self-importance.

The Queen conducted King David to London and caused him to be imprisoned in the Tower, after he had been led round the City mounted on a large black war-horse. The royal captive formed the most conspicuous object in a grand procession; but this parade of his person was made not alone for ostentatious display, but because it was very desirable that he should be well known in case of escape.

Having thus satisfactorily overcome her husband’s Scottish foes, the Queen, attended by many noble ladies, passed over to Calais, which Edward and his army were still occupied in besieging. The King was greatly annoyed at the citizens for holding out so long, and when at last he had starved them into surrender, he was with difficulty persuaded from putting them all to the sword. Froissart thus details the King’s orders and the sequel: “‘Tell the governor of Calais that the garrison and inhabitants shall be pardoned, excepting six of the principal citizens, who must surrender themselves to death with ropes round their necks, bareheaded and barefooted, bringing the keys of the town

and castle in their hands.' The messenger returned to the brave governor of Calais, John de Vienne, who was waiting for him on the battlements, and told him all he had been able to gain from the King. The lord of Vienne went to the market-place and caused the bell to be rung, upon which all the inhabitants assembled in the town-hall. He then related to them all he had said and the answers he had received, and that he could not obtain better conditions. Then they broke into lamentations of grief and despair, so that the hardest heart would have had compassion on them; and their valiant governor, John de Vienne, wept bitterly. After a short pause, the most wealthy citizen of Calais, by name Eustace St. Pierre, rose up and said, 'Gentlemen, both high and low, it would be pity to suffer so many of our countrymen to die through famine: it would be highly meritorious in the eyes of our Saviour if such misery could be prevented. If I die to serve my dear townsmen I trust I shall find grace before the tribunal of God. I name myself first of the six.' When Eustace had done speaking, his fellow-citizens all rose up and almost adored him, casting themselves on their knees with tears and groans. Then another citizen rose up and said he would be the second to Eustace; his name was John Daire: after him James Wisant, who was very rich in money and land, and kinsman to Eustace and John. His example was followed by Peter Wisant, his brother: two others then offered themselves, which completed the number demanded by King Edward. The governor, De Vienne, mounted a small horse, for it was with difficulty he could walk, and conducted them through the gate to the barriers. He said to Sir Walter Manny, who was there waiting for him, 'I deliver up to you, as governor of Calais, these six citizens, and swear to you they were, and are at this day, the most wealthy and respectable inhabitants of the town. I beg of you, gentle sir, that of your goodness you would beseech the King that they may not be put to death.' 'I cannot answer what the King will do with them,' replied Sir Walter; 'but you may depend upon this, that I will do all I can to save them.' The barriers were then opened, and the six citizens were conducted to the pavilion of King Edward. The six citizens fell upon their knees and with uplifted hands said, 'Most gallant King! see before you six citizens of Calais, who have been capital merchants, and who bring you the keys of the town and castle. We surrender ourselves to your absolute will and pleasure, in order to save our fellow-citizens, who have suffered so much misery. Condescend, then, out of your nobleness, to have compassion on us.' The English barons, knights, and squires, that were assembled there in great numbers, all wept at this sight; but Edward eyed them with angry looks, for he hated much the people of Calais, because of the great losses he had suffered at sea by them. Forthwith he ordered the heads of the six citizens to be struck off. Those present entreated the

King to be more merciful, but he would not listen to them. Then Sir Walter Manny spoke: 'Ah, gentle King! I beseech you restrain your anger. Tarnish not your noble reputation by such an act as this! Truly the whole world will cry out on your cruelty if you should put to death these six worthy persons.' For all this the King gave a wink to his marshal and said, 'I will have it so,' and ordered the headsman to be sent for, adding, 'the men of Calais had done him such damage, it was fit they should suffer for it.' At this the Queen of England, who was very near her lying-in, fell on her knees before King Edward, and with tears said, 'Ah, gentle sir! sithence I crossed the sea with great peril to see you, I have never asked you one favour; now, I must humbly ask as a gift, for the sake of the Son of the blessed Mary, and as a proof of your love to me, the lives of these six men.' King Edward looked at her for some time in silence, and then said, 'Ah, lady! I wish you had been anywhere else than here. You have entreated in such a manner that I cannot refuse you. I therefore give them you: do as you please with them.' The Queen conducted the six citizens to her apartments, and had the halters taken from about their necks; after which she new clothed them, and served them with a plentiful dinner, and had them escorted out of the camp."

Two years later (1348) England was visited by the awful pestilence known as the Black Death, which had wrought such havoc in the south of Europe. Few households in London escaped the loss of at least one member, and many families were entirely exterminated. Even royalty did not escape. Philippa's second daughter, the beautiful Princess Joanna, of Woodstock, betrothed to Don Pedro, the heir of Alphonso, King of Castile, having crossed over to Bordeaux, was conducted thither to Bayonne, where the marriage ceremony was to take place; but on the evening of her arrival she was stricken by the dreadful malady, and next day at the very hour fixed for the wedding the bridegroom was following her body to the tomb. To so fond a mother as Queen Philippa this loss must have been a sad blow; but probably in after years, when her intended son-in-law had earned for himself the name of Peter the Cruel, she could rejoice that her beloved daughter had been taken from the evil to come.

Subsequent to the siege of Calais the greater part of Philippa's life was spent in England in unobtrusive good works. She directed the reopening of the coal mines on her estates in Tynedale. The industry had been abandoned during the long wars with Scotland, but while residing in the north, Philippa had noted the capabilities of the neighbourhood, and now that peace was established she took measures to increase not only her own revenue, but the commercial prosperity of the country.

It was well that the good Queen should see but little of the devastating war which her

fierce lord and beloved son Edward carried on in France. Her part was to enjoy the military reputation gained by the Black Prince at the famous battle of Poitiers, and to entertain the royal and noble prisoners brought to this country after the victory. A brilliant festival was held at Windsor in 1358 for the amusement of the Kings David of Scotland and John of France. It was the first great meeting of the Knights of the Garter since the completion of the Round Tower at Windsor, a building erected specially for the feasts of the order. At the tournament both the royal prisoners entered the lists, but the pleasure of the day was somewhat marred by the death of the Earl of Salisbury. He was killed in the *mêlée* before the eyes of his beautiful countess. Among the celebrated prisoner guests was Sir Bertrand du Guesclin, the famous French champion, a short, fat man with a very broad face. The Queen overheard the Prince of Wales proposing to the valiant knight, according to the custom of the day, that he would name his own ransom, and all the court expressed surprise when he mentioned the enormous sum of a hundred thousand crowns. "I know," said Sir Bertrand, "a hundred knights in my native Bretagne who would mortgage their last acre rather than Du Guesclin should either languish in captivity or be rated below his value; yea, and there is not a woman in France now toiling at her distaff who would not devote a day's earnings to set me free, for well have I deserved of their sex. And if all the fair spinners in France employ their hands to redeem me, think you, Prince, whether I shall bide much longer in your country?" Then Philippa said to the Prince, "I will give," said she, "fifty thousand crowns, my son, as my contribution towards your gallant prisoner's ransom; for, though a foe to my husband, a knight who is famed for the courteous protection he has afforded my sex deserves the assistance of every woman." To this Sir Bertrand gracefully replied, "Ah, lady! being the ugliest knight in France, I never reckoned on any goodness from your sex, except from those whom I had aided by my sword; but your bounty will make me think less despicably of myself."

The mother of a large and affectionate family—she had twelve children in all, many of whom were remarkable for beauty and strength either of body or mind—Philippa could not be exempt from the cares and sorrows of such a position. We have alluded to the sad death of Princess Joanna; three more of her children preceded the Queen to the grave. In the marriage of the Princess Royal her parents were much disappointed. She was for some time betrothed to the young Count of Flanders, who in the early part of the French war resided as a hostage at the court of Edward III., but the wishes of the young people did not agree with those of their seniors. The Count of Flanders had no mind for such a grasp-all father-in-law as the King of England, who was already interfering in his

dominions, having taken the part of the brewer Von Artavelt, a revolutionist in guise of a reformer ; and Isabella was in love with a handsome and accomplished nobleman named De Courcy, who had little to recommend him to her parents but relationship to an emperor of Germany. Through the connivance of the Princess, young Flanders succeeded in escaping to the French court ; but Philippa was greatly annoyed at this circumstance and the downfall of her hopes, and it was not till Isabella was quite thirty years of age that she was allowed to marry the husband of her choice.

With regard to the marriage of the Black Prince, matters did not run smoothly either. He was long and deeply attached to his cousin, the beautiful Joanna, daughter of Edmund, Earl of Kent. This lady had been contracted in infancy to the Earl of Salisbury, but as she grew up her friends procured a divorce from him, knowing that she returned the affection of the Prince of Wales. But the Queen would not hear of the match ; she was prejudiced against Joanna because she was gay and lively, or, as Philippa insisted, flighty ; and Froissart repeats much Court scandal about her.

At length, when she was twenty-five, the lady was persuaded into marriage with Sir Thomas Holland, but not very long after the nobleman died, and as Prince Edward had persisted in remaining single, the Queen could not longer withhold her consent, and the constant lovers were wedded in her presence at Windsor in the autumn of 1361. The union proved a happy one, and Philippa was spared to rejoice with the parents at the birth of their son and heir, Richard of Bordeaux, but happily she did not live to see the painful decline of body and mind which preceded the early death of her favourite son.

Her own death we will let Froissart relate : “ I must now speak of the death of the most courteous, liberal, and noble lady that ever reigned in her time, the Lady Philippa of Hainault, Queen of England. While her son, the Duke of Lancaster, was encamped in the valley of Tonneham, ready to give battle to the Duke of Burgundy, her death happened in England, to the infinite misfortune of King Edward, his children, and the whole kingdom. That excellent lady the Queen, who had done so much good, aiding all knights, ladies, and damsels when distressed who had applied to her, lay at this time dangerously sick at Windsor Castle, and every day her disorder increased. When the good Queen perceived that her end approached she called to the King, and extending her right hand from under the bedclothes, put it into the right hand of King Edward, who was oppressed with sorrow, and thus spoke :—

“ ‘ We have, my husband, enjoyed our long career in happiness, peace, and prosperity. But I entreat, before I depart, and we are for ever separated in this world, that you will grant me these requests.’

“King Edward with sighs and tears replied, ‘Lady, name them; whatever be your requests they shall be granted.’

“‘My lord,’ she said, ‘I beg you will fulfil whatever engagements I have entered into with merchants for their wares, as well on this as on the other side of the sea; I beseech you to fulfil whatever gifts or legacies I have made or left to churches wherein I have paid my devotions, and to all my servants whether male or female; and when it shall please God to call you, choose no other sepulchre than mine, and that you will lie by my side in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey.’

“The King in tears replied—‘Lady, all this shall be done.’

“Soon after the good lady made the sign of the cross on her breast, and having recommended to the King her youngest son Thomas, who was present praying to God, she gave up her spirit, which I firmly believe was caught by holy angels and carried to the glory of heaven, for she had never done anything by thought, word, or deed to endanger her soul.

“Thus died this admirable Queen of England, in the year of grace 1369, the vigil of the assumption of the Virgin, the 14th of August.”

We conclude with Philippa’s motto, the key-word to her life, *Ichs wrude muche*—“I wrought much.”



W. J. Edwards

ANNE OF BOHEMIA.

Queen of Richard 2nd.

XII.

ANNE OF BOHEMIA.

NO more suitable princess could have been selected by the Regency of England as consort for Richard II. than Anne of Bohemia. Several other ladies were candidates for the honour : Katherine, daughter of the Emperor Louis ; Katherine, daughter of the Duke of Milan ; and, nearer home, John of Gaunt, Richard's uncle, would have been better pleased if his nephew had married *his* daughter ; but "the Lady Anne was the one whom the King did specially affect," though the reason of his preference is not easy to find. She was the daughter of the Emperor Charles IV. of Germany and his wife Elizabeth, daughter of the Duke of Pomerania, and was born at Prague in the year 1367, so at her marriage in 1382 she was just fifteen years of age and her husband only one year older. Her father, the Emperor, died during the negotiations for the alliance, and these were concluded through the Duke and Duchess of Brabant, who appear to have taken a special interest in the girl, and, on account of the friendly relations thus maintained with the Low Countries, England continued to enjoy the advantages of free commercial intercourse with that wealthy district, begun with the reign of the late queen. Sir Simon Burley, Warden of the Cinque Ports and Constable of Dover, the tutor of Richard and his father's great friend, who is described as "one of the finest gentlemen in England, a man of excellent parts, great sweetness of temper, politeness, and affability," was entrusted with the delicate mission to complete the treaty and conduct the Princess Anne to England. Froissart says that "the Duke and Duchess of Brabant, from the love they bore the King of England, received his envoy most courteously, and said 'it would be a good match for their niece.'" But the Empress-mother, before she would consent to part with her daughter, commanded a wise and prudent knight, Primislaus of Saxony, to go over to England and spy out the land, for even royalty in the heart of Europe had in those unenlightened days but a very faint notion of what sort of a country England was. However, in due time the messenger returned with a favourable report, and bringing presents from Richard to the court ladies of Bohemia, so as Froissart tells us, "that Anne set out

on her perilous journey attended by the Duke of Saxony and his Duchess, who was her aunt, and with a suitable number of knights and damsels. They came through Brabant to Brussels, where Duke Wenceslaus and his Duchess received the young Princess and her company very grandly. She remained with her uncle and aunt more than a month; she was afraid to proceed, for she had been informed there were twelve large armed vessels, full of Normans, on the sea between Calais and Holland, that seized and pillaged all that fell into their hands, without any respect to persons. The report was current that they cruised in those seas awaiting the coming of the King of England's bride, because the King of France and his council were very uneasy at Richard's German alliance and desirous of breaking off the match. At length the Duke of Brabant sent the lords of Rousselans and Bousquehoir to remonstrate with Charles V., who was her near relative, upon which King Charles remanded the Norman cruisers into port, but declared that he granted this favour solely out of love to his cousin Anne, and out of no regard or consideration for the King of England. The royal bride took leave of her uncle and aunt and departed from Brussels. Duke Wenceslaus had the Princess escorted by one hundred spears. She passed through Bruges, where the Earl of Flanders received her very magnificently and entertained her for three days. She then set out for Gravelines, where the Earl of Salisbury waited for her with five hundred spears and as many archers. This noble lord conducted her in triumph to Calais, which belonged to her betrothed lord. Then the Brabant spearmen took their departure, after seeing her safely delivered to the English governor. The lady Anne stayed at Calais only till the wind became favourable. She embarked on a Wednesday morning and the same day arrived at Dover; but scarcely had the Bohemian princess set her foot on the shore when a sudden convulsion of the sea took place, unaccompanied with wind, and unlike any winter storm; but the water was so violently shaken and troubled, and put in such furious commotion, that the ship in which the Queen's person was conveyed was so terribly rent in pieces before her very face, and the vessels that rode in company were tossed so, that it astonished all beholders." No wonder that the Princess tarried at Dover two days to repose herself before resuming her journey!

This Queen brought no dowry with her; on the contrary, it is recorded that "a loan was made to Wenceslaus, King of Bohemia, of 18,000 marks, a moiety whereof was to be remitted upon delivery of his sister at Calais, according to the conventions."

Of the personal appearance of Anne of Bohemia, though she is spoken of in histories of the times as "the beauteous queen," her portraits do not give an idea of great loveliness. She had a broad German face, with heavy jaw, long upper lip, and narrow forehead,

but her complexion was brilliant and her figure good. But, certainly, the most remarkable part of the young bride was her headdress, which must surely, at first sight, have startled the bridegroom. It was an erection—we can call it by no other word—at least two feet high and the same in breadth, built of wire and pasteboard, and with piked horns, the framework being covered with glittering tissue or gauze; the long, trailing gown, worn with this head-dress, partially counterbalanced its top-heavy appearance, which must have been equally ridiculous and unbecoming. These wide-spreading and monstrous *coiffures* became at once the rage, and very soon the thunders of the Church were hurled against them as the “moony tire” mentioned by Ezekiel. Happily the fashion did not last long in England, but in Hungary and Bohemia it was for some time in great favour with the ladies. It came from the East, introduced by the Crusaders.

The young King Richard, who welcomed this royal lady, was, in person at least, likely to please any princess. He is described as “the loveliest youth that the eye could behold,” singularly fond of splendour and show, generous and munificent; “fair and of a ruddy complexion, well-made, finely shaped, somewhat taller than the middle size, and extremely handsome.” He had a lisp in his speech that “would have become a lady better, and an hastiness of temper which subjected him to some inconveniences; but he had an infinite deal of good-nature, great politeness, and a candour that could not be enough admired.” The only surviving child of the Black Prince, he had, unfortunately, been brought up by his mother and her sons with the most lavish indulgence and in the most fatal ideas of his own importance.

The entrance of the royal bride into London was most magnificent. Sevenscore men of the Goldsmiths’ Company in gorgeous attire, with attendant minstrels, came out to meet the “Cæsar’s sister.” In Cheapside, at the Fountain—a temporary erection representing a castle with turrets, with a fountain of wine on either side—the King and Queen were each presented with a valuable gold crown; and when the procession had proceeded a little farther, a table of gold, with a representation of the Trinity richly embossed or chased upon it (worth about one thousand pounds of the present money) was offered to Richard, and to the Queen a table of equal value, on which was displayed a figure of St. Anne.

The wedding was celebrated at the close of the Christmas festivities in the chapel royal of the Westminster Palace. Richard was much pleased with his wife, and, whatever might be his faults, to her he was always the kindest and most affectionate of husbands. A week was spent by them in festivity at Windsor before the Queen’s coronation. Her special request on the occasion is a monument of her kindly disposition, and won for her among the populace the title of “Good Queen Anne.” She interceded with Richard on behalf of

the many poor captives lying under sentence of death or severe punishment for the crime of joining in Wat Tyler's rebellion, which had been but recently suppressed. The King in answer to her prayers proclaimed a general pardon. Grand tournaments were held for several successive days, the German knights who had accompanied Anne gaining the admiration of the English by their skill in feats of arms.

This Queen enjoys the credit of having introduced the general use of pins such as we have at present into England, and she also brought with her the side-saddle—not, indeed, the comfortable and convenient lady's saddle of to-day, but a sort of seat with a rest for both the feet, not unsuitable for state processions, where the horse was led by an attendant. "Before this time women had rode very unseemly astride, as men do."

Shortly after the marriage and coronation of the Queen, Parliament, "which by this great lady's arrival was interrupted and prorogued," reassembled; the grant of a subsidy to defray the various expenses demanded, and "many things concerning the excess of apparel were wholesomely enacted." Luxury in dress certainly ran riot at this period. The King was personally a fop, and had an inordinate love of finery. One coat in his possession was valued at thirty thousand marks; and no wonder, for it was "broidered of precious stone;" and Sir John Arundel was thought to surpass the King in magnificence of attire, for he had no less than fifty-two rich suits of cloth-of-gold tissue. In Camden's "Britannia," we read that "the Commons were besotted in excess of apparel, in white surecoats reaching to their loins; some in a garment reaching to their heels, close before, and strowting out on all sides, so that on the back they make men seem women, and this they call by a ridiculous name, *gowne*; their hoods were little, tied under the chin, and buttoned like the women's, but set with gold and silver and precious stones; they have tirrepippes (tippetts) hanging down to the heels in front, all jagged; their hose are of two colours, or pied with more; their girdles are of gold and silver, some worth twenty marks; their shoes and pattens are snouted and piked more than a finger long, crooked upwards, which they call *crackowes*, resembling the devil's claws, which are fastened to the knees with chains of gold and silver." He concludes with the contemptuous and shrewd remark: "Thus are they garmented which are lions in the hall and hares in the field."

The same year that Queen Anne came to England saw the first of our English religious reformers, John Wickliffe, arraigned before the Council of Lambeth for his heretical writings. The King's mother, Joanna, Princess of Wales, was one of his converts, and at her instigation Anne used her influence with Richard, who not only saved his life, but granted him permission to retire to his living of Lutterworth. The patron of this leader of Lollardism was the haughty and arrogant John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, who but a

few years later came to an open rupture with his nephew the King, his religion being the pretext for the quarrel. Again the royal ladies favoured the reformers. Lancaster was threatened with arrest and trial on some capital points before Sir Robert Trevelian, a man entirely in the monarch's interest. "Nevertheless, the hopes of wicked men delighting in their country's miseries and civil combustion were made void by the great diligence of our lady Queen, and of the Princess Joan, who spared not her continual pains and expenses in travelling between the King and the Duke (albeit she was exceeding tender of complexion, and scarce able to bear her own body's weight through corpulency), till they were fully reconciled."

King Richard now left his young wife in the south, and took command of his army in Scotland. The most memorable incident in the campaign was a certain private quarrel and its results. Lord Stafford, a great favourite with the army, whom Anne had honoured by calling him "her knight," was despatched from the seat of war with messages to the Queen. At York he was met by Sir John Holland, the King's half-brother, who had long been very jealous of him, partly on account of the adoration shown him by the army, and partly from the Queen's regard. A cause of quarrel was easy to find. Lord Stafford's archers had, while protecting a Bohemian knight (an adherent of the Queen's), slain a squire of Sir John Holland's. On this pretext Sir John attacked Stafford, and without hesitation or parley killed him on the spot. Great was the King's rage when he heard of this foul murder and the Earl of Stafford's passionate appeal for vengeance on the slayer of his noble son. Richard was determined that justice should be done, even though the offender was his mother's son. He vowed that so soon as the criminal should leave the shrine of St. John of Beverley, whither he had fled, he should be put to death. But such was the effect of this determination on Princess Joanna that after four days of violent grief she expired at Wallingford, and Richard, always affectionate, was so deeply shocked and grieved by this melancholy event that he granted his brother full pardon. Sir John left England shortly after on a pilgrimage to Syria, and did not return till after the Queen's death.

We are here compelled to record one act of the gentle Queen, the injustice of which not even her love and duty to her lord can excuse. Robert de Vere, Duke of Ireland, a great favourite with the King, fell violently in love with a Bohemian lady of the Queen's bedchamber, "a woman very pleasant and agreeable in conversation;" but he was already a married man, and his wife was Philippa, granddaughter of Edward III., being the child of his daughter Isabella and Enguerrand de Courcy. Notwithstanding the dire offence which they were giving to the numerous and powerful members of the royal family,

Richard and Anne did their best to procure for Duke Robert a divorce from his wife, and the Queen even wrote herself an entreating letter on the subject to Pope Urban.

For this criminal and foolish act the King and Queen were not left unpunished. The Duke of Ireland saved himself by flight, but the Duke of Gloucester and the Earl of Arundel, who possessed more power in the land than the monarch himself, took revenge in seizing by fair means or foul several of the King's most attached servants, causing them to be ignominiously executed at Tyburn by having their throats cut. "Sir Simon Burley only had the worship to have his head stricken off. Loe! the noble respect which the gentle lords had to justice and amendment." The death of Burley after a show of trial was a great grief to the Queen, who was fondly attached to this Englishman, who had conducted her all the way from her German home with so much courtesy and kindness. But her intercession for him was utterly disregarded; and as if to wound the Queen the more deeply, matters connected with the expenses of her journey to England were made the pretext for his disgrace.

This was but the beginning of trouble for Richard and Anne. The Parliament, known as "the Merciless," attacked the Queen's attendants on account of their leaning towards Lollardism, and the party in rebellion took up arms, and, headed by the Duke of Gloucester and Henry of Bolingbroke, defeated the royalist troops at Radcot Bridge, but through the mediation of the Archbishop of Canterbury an amnesty was afterwards arranged. It took Queen Anne two whole days to persuade Richard to receive the Archbishop; when at length he did so, "many plans were proposed to the King. By the good advice of the Queen he restrained his choler and agreed to accompany the Archbishop to London. For some months the sovereigns were allowed but little liberty, though permitted to reside either at Eltham or at Shene, the favourite summer palace of this Queen; but at an extraordinary council held in the Easter holidays the King, to the great surprise of the assembled lords, rose and demanded, "What age he was of?" and on receiving their reply he proceeded to declare "that he was certainly of age to govern his own house, family, and kingdom, since every man in the nation was earlier admitted to the management of his estates and affairs, and he saw no reason why he should be denied of a right which the law gave to the meanest of his subjects. Richard was just twenty-two when he gave this evidence of manly spirit, and encouraged by the example of young Charles VI. of France, who had lately emancipated himself from the strict tutelage of his uncles, the King proceeded to displace the Archbishop of York, Duke of Gloucester, Earl of Warwick, Bishop of Hereford, and Earl of Arundel, with all other officers of state appointed by Gloucester, and to bestow their appointments on persons selected by himself. He issued

proclamations calculated to conciliate and reassure the people, and went through a ceremony which amounted to recoronation, at which the great lords were required to renew their oaths of allegiance. The Duke of Lancaster returning from Spain at this period, proceeded to Reading, where the King was holding court, "as well to present his duty to his sovereign as to be an author of love and peace between the lords, which he graciously effected, as seeming to addict his mind to offices of piety and public benefit." But Richard got rid of this self-appointed mediator as soon as possible, by bestowing on him the duchies of Aquitaine and Guienne.

To celebrate his accession to full royal authority, Richard held a grand tournament in London. Queen Anne presided and distributed the prizes—a rich gold crown to the foremost of the opponents and a handsome jewelled clasp to the best tenant of the lists. During the festivities Anne was lodged in the palace of the Bishop of London, and here she held a grand banquet with music and dancing.

Richard was now ruler of his own kingdom, but his authority was not quite undisputed. In 1392 he demanded from the citizens of London a loan of a thousand pounds; they not only refused to grant it themselves, but when a Lombard offered to lend the sum they brutally illtreated him. For this, and some serious rioting which followed, Richard dissolved their magistracy, imprisoned the lord mayor and some of the principal officers, and threatened "that as the city did not keep his peace, he should resume her charters." In their distress the citizens appealed to the Queen, and at her earnest entreaty Richard, after much hesitation, consented to pardon them. Out of gratitude the Londoners then prepared a splendid entertainment for the King as he passed through the city on his way from Shene to Westminster, and, as he entered the Southwark Bridge Gate, they presented him with two beautiful white horses handsomely caparisoned with cloth of gold and silver bells. The festivities were on such a large and extravagant scale that the Londoners must have expended over them an even greater sum than they had refused to lend.

In 1394, after thirteen years of married life, this gentle Queen died, in her favourite palace of Shene, to the great sorrow of the King and all who knew her. It is probable she fell a victim to the plague then so fearfully common in Europe, as up to a few hours of her death she appeared in good health. Richard, who "loved her even to a kinde of madness," was the more afflicted that he was quite unprepared for the blow. He gave way to the most vehement expressions of sorrow, and even ordered the palace of Shene, the scene of so many of the happy hours he had spent with his beloved, to be levelled to the ground; and, though he was afterwards persuaded to reverse this order, he never went near the place again.

As a last tribute of love and respect, Richard buried his queen with the utmost magnificence. He issued orders for all the nobles of the land, with their ladies, to be in attendance; and the citizens of London likewise sent a large deputation dressed in deepest black. The funeral obsequies were performed in Westminster Abbey. "So many torches and tapers were lighted up that the like was never seen before; the King would have it so, because she was the daughter of the Emperor of Rome and Germany." Richard so designed the tomb of Petworth marble erected to her memory, that his own last resting-place might be beside his beloved Anne.

Had this benignant Queen been longer spared to exert her gentle influence over the kind-hearted but unstable Richard, we may safely say that he never would have been led into those crimes and follies which brought so much misery on himself and his people.



Edw^d Corbould

W.H. Mote

ISABELLA OF VALOIS.

2nd Wife of Richard 2nd

LONDON VIRTUE & CO

XIV.

ISABELLA OF VALOIS.

THE surname of this princess, "The Little Queen," is certainly most appropriate, for she was crowned Queen Consort of England at a time of life when most royal ladies are still in the nursery, and returned to her native land a virgin widow only thirteen years of age.

Isabella of Valois, born at Paris in 1387, was the eldest daughter of Charles VI. of France and his beautiful queen, Isabeau de Bavière, who in after years brought trouble and sorrow to her relations by her notorious vices and extravagances. Isabella inherited her mother's lovely large dark eyes and bright clear complexion, combined with her father's kindly disposition, so that, had she been but a few years older, Richard could not have desired a more suitable companion. After the death of his beloved Anne of Bohemia, Richard took it into his head that he ought to marry again, but it is characteristic of this weak-minded king that he made a compromise with duty little calculated to increase his own happiness or that of his people. Parliament naturally urged him to unite himself to a princess capable of speedily bringing him an heir to the throne—the settlement of the succession being of even more importance than usual, as the near relations of the King were many in number, and each and all of them were struggling for power and self-aggrandisement. Froissart tells us, "the King is advised to marry again, and hath made researches everywhere, but in vain, for a suitable lady. He would willingly ally himself to the Duke of Bourgoyne or the Count of Hainault, but they have no daughters unmarried. The Duke of Gloucester hath one of a proper age, and would fain have his nephew marry her; but Richard will not hear of it, pretending she is too near in blood, being his cousin-german; though perhaps the true reason is that the relation of father to the Queen being added to that of uncle to the King the Duke's arrogance would have swelled to an insupportable degree, and his power raised to an irresistible height, which is already too formidable."

Richard was secretly very much afraid of this Duke of Gloucester, who was a man

“possessed of a great estate, very dangerous and enterprising, yet doing nothing but for money, of wonderful parts, and an excellent politician, proud, presumptuous, imperious, revengeful, bloody, false, and insincere, having a strong party attached to his interests, yet feared rather than loved.” The King hoped, by means of a friendly alliance with France, to outweigh his power, but it speaks little for the King’s authority in his own realm that, to obtain the Duke’s consent to his second marriage and the treaty of peace with France, Richard gave him as a bribe fifty thousand nobles for himself, and for his son Humphrey an income of two thousand pounds a year, with the title of Earl of Rochester.

The preliminaries for the marriage took some time to arrange. When the English Parliament first sent to Paris its commissaries, the Archbishop of Dublin, the Bishop of St. David’s, with the Earls of Rutland and Nottingham, Lord Beaumont, and William le Scrope, chamberlain of the household, the French council, although favourably inclined, refused to take any steps till a treaty between the two nations should be signed; for although the peace-loving Richard had never taken any offensive measures, France and England were still nominally at war. Charles VI. demanded a truce of thirty years. This was exceedingly unpopular in England, where animosity to the French had grown very strong, and Gloucester’s party made the most of the opportunity to poison men’s minds against their King. Richard, however, would have his way, and at length the terms of the truce were arranged, and Gloucester’s consent obtained, as well as that of the King’s other uncles, the Dukes of York and Lancaster.

Froissart gives the following details relative to the little Isabella. “The English ambassadors desired an interview with the Princess, which the French council was at first loth to grant, saying, ‘How could anyone tell how so young a child would conduct herself at such an interview?’ but when in her presence the Earl-marshal dropped upon his knees and said, ‘Madam, if it please God, you shall be our lady queen,’ she replied instantly and without anyone prompting her, ‘Sir, if it please God and my lord and father, that I be Queen of England, I shall be well pleased thereat, for I have been told I shall then be a great lady.’ Also the appearance and manners of this young Princess were very agreeable to the English ambassadors, and they thought among themselves she would be a lady of high honour and worth.” And the courtier-historian adds, “She was from this time styled the Queen of England, and it was at the time told it was pretty to see her, young as she was, practising how to act the queen.” When all arrangements were made, even to obtaining a dispensation from Pope Boniface, because there was some degree of relationship between the contracting parties, Richard, attended by the Dukes of Lancaster and Gloucester, and a great train of some of the principal nobles of the kingdom, male and

female, sailed for Calais on the 29th of September, 1396; and a month later, at an interview which took place between Guisnes and Ardres, the French King delivered to Richard his daughter, who, surrounded only by English ladies, with the exception of Madame de Coucy, accompanied her future husband to Calais. There, on English territory, the nuptials were solemnised by the Archbishop of Canterbury, at the Church of St. Nicolas. Great was the feasting at the wedding, and "the minstrels and heralds were so liberally remunerated that they were satisfied." Then a complimentary visit was paid to the bride and bridegroom by the Dukes of Bourbon and Orleans. Gloucester, who had received special attentions and many valuable presents, still in his heart disapproved of the proceedings, and it was observed that he pointed out the valuable plate of gold and silver to his friends, saying that France was still a very rich country, and that peace ought not to be made; and great was his indignation when at his marriage Richard renounced all claims to the crown of France in right of Isabella or her descendants.

After a smooth passage, occupying but three hours, the Queen was carried from Dover in a rich litter to Eltham Palace, sleeping one night at Rochester, and passing through Dartford. At Eltham the large concourse of English nobility which had accompanied the King and Queen bade farewell to the sovereigns and went home. A few days later Isabella was conducted to the Tower, and thence to Westminster. The Londoners offered rich gifts, as their custom was; and so great was the curiosity of the public to see this child-queen that several people were trampled to death in the press.

The coronation of Isabella took place on Sunday, January 7th, at Westminster Abbey. The splendour and extravagance of the reign appeared at this festival to have reached their greatest height, and the absurdity of the dresses, customs, and amusements of all classes prove that good taste was certainly not the guide of expense on this occasion. It was well for the Queen that she was too young to have anything to do with questions of court precedence, for that fruitful cause of discord among great ladies in every age and every clime, was just now causing much disquiet in the breasts of the female aristocracy of England. Shortly before Richard's second wedding, great displeasure had been caused by the Duke of Lancaster's marriage with Katherine Swinford, daughter of Paon de Ronet, a knight of Hainault, and widow of Sir Otes Swinford. On the death of her husband, this lady was appointed by the Duke governess to his two daughters by his first wife, and when she became Duchess of Lancaster she was already the mother of those sons of the Duke afterwards so celebrated in history as the Beauforts. So the duchesses of the blood royal were greatly shocked and said "the Duke had disgraced himself by marrying a woman of light character (though in herself a person of

sense and perfectly well bred), and as she would take rank as the second lady in the kingdom, the young Queen would be dishonourably accompanied by her; but, for their parts, they would leave her to do the honours of the court alone, for they would never enter any place where she was. They themselves would be disgraced if they permitted such a base-born duchess, who had been mistress of the Duke, to take precedence of them, and their hearts would burst with grief were it to happen." But as the Pope legitimatised the children, and the King gave a patent for the same purpose, qualifying them to hold all appointments and honours short of the royal dignity, the ladies could not long persist in their virtuous determination.

Windsor was chosen as the residence of Queen Isabella, and here her education was carried on under the superintendence of the King's cousin, Madame de Coucy; but it was subject to frequent interruptions in the visits of King Richard, who loved to leave the affairs of state and amuse himself by petting his pretty little wife; his winning, gentle manners, gay dress, and unchanging kindness and affection, met with their due reward. Isabella loved no one so well as her husband, his company was her delight, and, child as she was, she cherished for him an affection which stood the test of trial and adversity. Richard still preserved too vivid a memory of his beloved Anne of Bohemia to desire the companionship of another woman, but in the gentle and beautiful girl he found a human plaything of his very own.

When Isabella had been a short time in England, Charles of France sent the Count de St. Pol on a visit to Richard, that he might ascertain whether his daughter was happy and well cared for in her new home. This nobleman was married to Maude the Fair, half-sister to Richard, so there need have been no political motive for the visit, but the Duke of Gloucester desired the people to think otherwise. He steadily circulated reports that the King was about to cede to his friend the King of France the important town of Calais, which Edward III. had expended so much blood and treasure in acquiring, and the public was barely satisfied, even after Richard had given a solemn assurance of the utter falsity of the tale to a deputation which waited on him to know the truth. Richard now perceived that so long as Gloucester was free, he himself was not in safety. Indeed, the Duke, in his insolence and pride of power, made hardly any attempt to conceal his schemes. He had resolved to shut up the King and Queen in a fortress, where they should be well guarded, and might eat and drink in plenty as long as it was convenient to let Richard live, and then the King of France might have his daughter. It is curious that Gloucester took into his confidence young Mortimer, Earl of March, heir-apparent to the throne. Binding

this nephew to secrecy, the Duke unfolded his plans, how "certain influential persons had elected him as King of England," and that "the project was supported by the Earl of Arundel, the Earl of Warwick, and many of the prelates and barons of England." Mortimer was horrified at the scheme, but having passed his word he wisely left the scene of coming strife, obtaining the post of Viceroy of Ireland. It was significant too that about this time the dukes of York and Lancaster removed themselves and their families from court and that the very attendants of the King and Queen frequently spoke to him of the danger of continuing in his service. At length Richard was roused to action. Gloucester was seized and conveyed to Calais, where he died suddenly, no one knew how. But the destruction of one enemy only made room for others to rise; from this time the King was constantly embroiled with his nobles. He executed the Earl of Arundel, and imprisoned the Earl of Warwick, only to find himself distracted by the quarrels of Bolingbroke and the Dukes of Norfolk and Hereford.

Scarcely was some sort of peace restored at Court by the banishment of Bolingbroke, than Richard heard that his much-loved nephew, Mortimer, was killed by the rebels in Ireland. Determined to avenge his death, the King set off for that country, visiting his child-queen on the way, bidding her farewell with great affection, taking her up in his arms and kissing her again and again. At Windsor he was informed that the Queen's governess, Madame de Coucy, was keeping up as much state as if she herself were sharer of the throne. How far this was true is unknown, but Richard certainly paid all her debts, dismissed her from office, and appointed in her stead his niece Eleanor, the lately widowed Lady Mortimer.

We need not follow Richard on his ill-timed expedition to Ireland, nor Henry Bolingbroke from his landing in Yorkshire to his meeting with the King in Wales. The Duke of York, whom Richard had appointed regent in his absence, conveyed Isabella to Wallingford Castle, a retreat he deemed safer than Windsor.

After the King had wandered for some time in Wales, where he had still many faithful subjects, he was decoyed into Flint Castle by his enemies. There Bolingbroke, now, by the death of his father, Duke of Lancaster, had an interview with Richard. Froissart puts these words into the mouth of the usurper: "He was come sooner than perhaps Richard wished, to assist him in the government of the realm, which he had ruled for twenty-two years to its prejudice." An anecdote of this meeting, related by the same author, is too interesting to be omitted.

Among the King's private pets was a beautiful greyhound named Math, which always testified the warmest attachment towards him, but would notice no one else. While

Richard and Lancaster were conversing together in the courtyard, the dog, who was loosed at the moment, bounded, not to the King, but to Henry, caressing him and placing his forepaws on his shoulders, as he had been wont to do with his unhappy master. Lancaster, surprised at this sudden affection, asked the King the meaning of it. "Richard replied, 'Cousin, it means a great deal for you, and very little for me.' 'How?' said the duke; 'pray explain it.' 'I understand by it,' said the unfortunate King, 'that this my favourite greyhound, Math, fondles and pays his court to you this day as King of England, which you will be, and I shall be deposed, for that the natural instinct of the creature perceives. Keep him, therefore, by your side; for, lo, he leaveth me, and will ever follow you.'"

Richard was now carried prisoner to London, where the citizens were strongly in favour of Bolingbroke. Shakespeare, in his play of *Richard II.*, has made powerful dramatic use of the tradition that on his sad journey from Wales to the capital, mounted on a sorry nag, with dress disordered and "guarded like a felon," the unfortunate monarch met Queen Isabella, also in custody of the rebels and travelling from Wallingford to Leeds, in Kent. The scene describing the meeting between the affectionate Richard and his loving little wife is pathetic in the extreme. At Leeds Castle, Isabella was placed in charge of the Duchess of Ireland, and here Madame de Coucy, who had certainly disobeyed the King's order to leave the kingdom, came to visit her former pupil, but the Londoners would not suffer her to remain near the Queen, and they caused all Isabella's attendants who were attached to the King to be dismissed and replaced by others of their own choosing, and Richard's name was never to be mentioned in her presence.

Meanwhile Richard was kept in confinement in the Tower. For several months he refused to sign his abdication in favour of his cousin, being especially mortified at the conduct of his relatives, and indignant that his wife was withheld from him, but at last, hoping to gain time, save his life, and perhaps obtain assistance from France, the King offered to resign his crown. The terms in which Bolingbroke couched his reply are truly characteristic: "It is necessary that the three Estates of the realm should hear this proposition, and in three days the Parliament will be assembled and can debate on the subject; the people want to crown me, for the common report in the country is that I have a better right to the crown than you. This was told our grandfather, King Edward, of happy memory, when he educated you and had you acknowledged heir to the crown; but his love was so strong for his son, the Prince of Wales, nothing could make him alter his purpose. If you had followed the example of the Prince you might still have been King; but you have always acted so contrary as to occasion the rumour to be generally

believed throughout England, that you were not the son of the Prince of Wales but of a priest or canon. As for me, I will give you my protection, and will guard and preserve your life, through compassion, as long as I shall be able."

Bolingbroke was declared King, September, 1399, almost, we may say, in right of conquest. He was suffered to occupy the throne because he possessed the skill required to hold the reins of government, for if there had been any sort of truth in the reported illegitimacy of Richard's birth—and the rumour was of the usurper's own starting—even then, the rights of Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, were entirely passed over.

But there was still a party loyal to Richard, though only a small one, and several attempts were made to release the monarch, now incarcerated at Pontefract. The Bishop of Carlisle (who alone had the courage to speak in Parliament on the injustice of deposing the King), the Lords Huntingdon and Salisbury, and the Duke of Aumerle, headed a conspiracy to assassinate Henry and replace Richard on the throne. The time fixed for the execution of this plot was during a grand tournament about to be held at Windsor. Unfortunately, part of the scheme was revealed to Henry in a letter found on the Duke of Aumerle, and the conspirators were forced to hasten their measures. Dressing up in the royal robes a man named Magdalen, who in person closely resembled the fallen sovereign, they declared he was Richard escaped from prison, and appealing to the people to defend their rightful sovereign, they soon raised a formidable force. They proceeded to Windsor, hoping to surprise Henry, but the energetic king was not to be so easily entrapped; he was already at the head of his troops, waiting to intercept the conspirators on their way to London; but, hearing this, the leaders turned towards Sunningdale in search of the little Queen. Isabella was enchanted to hear from the Earls of Kent and Salisbury that Henry had fled from Windsor, that Richard had escaped and was on his way to meet her. She eagerly consented to join their forces, and took special pride and joy in ordering the hated badge of Lancaster to be discarded by her attendants and that of Richard again adopted. But the poor little girl was doomed to speedy disappointment. At Cirencester the *ruse* about the King's escape was discovered, and the whole body betrayed into the hands of their enemies. Kent and Salisbury were executed at once, by order of the Mayor, and the Queen herself taken prisoner and kept in close confinement at Haverling-atte-Bower, where she remained till her return to France.

If history speaks truth, Richard's death was worthy the son of the valiant Black Prince. At a hint dropped by Henry, Sir Piers de Exton, taking with him eight men, proceeded to Pontefract, where Richard was confined. The day he reached the Castle, at dinner-time Richard noticed that the usual ceremony of tasting the viands was omitted, and he

demanded the reason. On being informed that it was the King's order, brought by Piers, he swore at both, and with a carving-knife struck the attendant in the face ; at this instant Piers and his party rushed into the room, and Richard, too well guessing their mission, seized a weapon from the first and defended himself with such energy that four of the assassins fell before him, and he would probably have slain more had not Sir Piers leaped upon a chair, and, as the ex-monarch passed, cleft his skull with a poleaxe.

The Queen was for some time in ignorance of her husband's fate, but Madame de Coucy, who had fled to France, proceeded without delay to Paris and informed Charles VI. of the imprisonment of his daughter and of Richard's death. The King of France, who had confirmed to Henry the truce of thirty years made with his predecessor, immediately demanded the restoration of his daughter. To this the King of England replied, that Isabella might very well remain in the country of her adoption as other queen-dowagers had done before her, and at the same time he asked her in marriage for the Prince of Wales. Young Henry visited her often at Havering, and both he and his father did all in their power to win her affection ; the ardent young Prince possessed many qualities likely to attract a girl of her age, and from the persistency with which he wooed her it is clear that her budding charms had taken his fancy. But their efforts were in vain. Isabella, though so young, had determined to remain faithful to Richard, whom she could scarcely believe was really dead. After much delay Henry IV. allowed her to return to France. King Charles thus got back his daughter, but nothing would induce Henry to give up her valuable jewels ; indeed, he would have had some trouble to do it now if he had been so minded, for he had divided them, as part of the spoils acquired with the throne, among his six children.

The subsequent history of Isabella may be told in a few words. Three years after her return to France she was betrothed, much against her own inclination, to the son of the Duc d'Orleans, a man of many virtues, brilliant talents, and elegance of mind and person. Two years elapsed before the marriage ; in the interval young Charles succeeded to the dukedom, his father being foully murdered by his kinsman, the Duc de Bourgogne, in the streets of Paris. Isabella soon changed her mind about her husband, whose affectionate devotion won her over, but their happiness was of short duration, for she died in 1410, after giving birth to a little girl.

Her gifted husband chronicled her virtues and charms in verses which won him the reputation of a poet. By a curious coincidence of fate, this Duc d'Orleans was destined to suffer a quarter of a century of captivity in the country of his fair wife's early troubles ; he was taken prisoner by Henry V. at Agincourt.



JOANNA OF NAVARRE.

Queen of Henry 4th

XV.

JOANNA OF NAVARRE.

IN the consort of Henry IV. we have the first instance of a widow sharing the throne of a King of England. The student of English history finds little mention of Queen Joanna beyond her name, but having carefully followed the incidents of her life, we shall see that she took a distinguished part in the politics of her times, and that indirectly her influence was not without its effect on the fortunes of this country.

By both parents this princess was descended from the royal family of France. Her father, Charles, on whom his subjects bestowed the well-earned distinction of "Le Mauvais," ruled Navarre in right of his mother, Donna Joanna, the daughter of Louis le Hutin, and, but for the Salic law, rightful heiress to the throne of France. She had in any case a better claim to it than our Edward III. However, Philip de Valois wore the crown in opposition to both, and Donna Joanna retained peaceable possession of the little kingdom of Navarre. The mother of the Joanna with whom we are concerned was Jane of France, daughter of the gallant and unfortunate monarch, John, who died in captivity in England, having honourably returned to his prison when he found his bleeding country unable to afford the large sum demanded as his ransom. Joanna appears to have inherited her grandfather's virtues and her father's cleverness without his vice. She was born in stormy times. Her father, Charles le Mauvais, the ambitious son of an ambitious mother, had been educated at the French court. He was counted one of the most accomplished princes of his age, courteous, eloquent in the extreme, and in his youth highly popular. He laid claim to the countries of Brie and Champagne. King John gave him the hand of his second daughter, but when he had secured the lady, the bridegroom only increased his demands, and during the whole of his life he was on bad terms with his wife's family. Our princess lost her mother in 1373, when only in her third year. At the age of eleven Joanna was sent for safety with her elder brothers to the castle of Breteuil, in Normandy. Here they were soon captured by the regents of France, taken to Paris, and kept some time as hostages for their father's future good

conduct; but the captivity was made as little irksome as possible. The regents, their own uncles (brothers of their mother), treated the royal infants with every kindness, and they were probably far happier and better cared for in Paris than ever they were in their own home. Charles, mad with rage at being deprived of his children, finding his demands for their return disregarded, hired a man to poison both the regents. Fortunately the villainy was discovered in time.

In order to strengthen himself against France, Charles le Mauvais had made alliance with the King of Castile, marrying his heir, Charles, to the daughter of that monarch, and affiancing Joanna to John, Prince of Castile; but on the death of his father, John, the new King, considered that marriage with a princess of Arragon would be more to his advantage, so he broke off his engagement with little Joanna. Nevertheless, at the earnest and persistent entreaty of his sister, he consented to act as mediator between Charles le Mauvais and the French court, and ultimately the release of Joanna and her brothers was secured through the agency of the very man who had rejected her as his affianced bride.

At the age of sixteen Joanna was given in marriage to John de Monfort, of Brittany. The Duke was quite an old man at the time, and had already been twice married. Educated with the family of Edward III., his first wife was Mary Plantagenet, daughter of that monarch, and her successor Lady Jane Holland, half-sister to Richard II., so that from long association his tastes and political sympathies were more English than French. That such was the case is proved by the effort made by the Regency of France to secure his union with a continental princess. That Duke John would marry again was taken for granted, neither of his wives having left an heir to his name, and great fears were entertained that his partiality for England would lead him to look for another spouse in that land. So Joan of Navarre, an aunt of Joanna, who had married the Viscount de Rohan, an intimate relation and vassal of the Duke of Brittany, was deputed by the French Court to persuade John "the Valiant," as he was justly called, to unite himself with her niece Joanna, intimating that her father would give as her dower 120,000 livres in gold of the coins of the Kings of France, and 6,000 livres due to Brittany on the lands of the Viscount d'Avranches. By the marriage contract signed at Pampeluna, this settlement was agreed to on the part of Charles le Mauvais, and her future husband assigned to her the cities of Nantes and Guerrande, the barony of Rais, of Chatellonie de Touffon, and that of Guerche.

Duke John appears to have been quite willing for the match, and despatched a trusty emissary, Pierre de Lesnarae, in a fine vessel of war to bring his bride with every

care along the shores of the rolling Bay of Biscay to her new home. The nuptial ceremony was performed at Saillé, near Guerrande, many nobles and knights being present, and the Duke extended the splendid feasts and pageants held in honour of the occasion to Joanna's dower city of Nantes. In spite of the disparity in years the union proved a very happy one. Joanna not only captivated her husband by her beauty, but by her remarkable tact and prudence she secured the continual affection and kindness of one noted for the irritability of his temper. Froissart writes that a few months after the marriage "the Duke and Duchess exchanged gifts in gold, sapphires, pearls, and other costly gems, with horses, falcons, and various sorts of wines in token of their mutual affection and delight in their union."

This same year, 1387, Joanna had to mourn the tragical death of her father, whom she loved though she could not respect, and her loss was embittered by the knowledge that he was justly hated and unpitied by the world. We have mentioned that this prince was as clever as he was wicked; he had studied the sciences deeply, and when age and infirmity overtook him, placed more faith in his own skill in the art of healing than in that of any physicians. He had long suffered from a complication of maladies, and something we might now call creeping paralysis was fast depriving him of the use of his limbs. To arrest the progress of the disease he caused his body to be encased in bandages dipped in spirits of wine and sulphur. One night the attendants, desiring to sever the thread with which these bandages had been sewn on, and having neither knife nor scissors at hand, applied a lighted candle. Instantly the spirits of wine ignited and the King's body was all ablaze, and before the flames could be extinguished he was so terribly burnt that, after lingering three days, he died in awful agony.

Joanna's fond husband never allowed her to suffer from the fact that her father had not paid one sou of her promised portion; but by one of his last acts Charles le Mauvais brought on his innocent daughter a disaster far worse than any loss of money. He had incited Duke John, well known as the most quarrelsome prince in Europe, against Oliver de Clisson, Constable of France, by suggesting that this lord cherished a criminal passion for his young wife. The accusation was utterly unfounded, but it was just the word needed to change two valiant knights, who in youth had been bosom friends, into deadly enemies. In early life John had not obtained possession of his dukedom of Brittany without a struggle, the other claimant being the Count de Penthièvre. This rival had been for many years a prisoner in England, but Clisson, who with his own sword had fought for Duke John, was much opposed to his partiality for England, and now not only ransomed de Penthièvre at his own expenes, but gave him in marriage his own

daughter and heiress, Margaret de Clisson. All this coming after what the King of Navarre had said made the old Duke wild for revenge, and he set about securing it in a manner so treacherous, that, whoever may have been originally in fault, our sympathies are enlisted henceforth on the side of Clisson.

At this moment a powerful fleet, preparing for the invasion of England, lay in one of the harbours of Brittany; but the armament never reached our shores. John invited Clisson, who was in command, with other nobles, to a complimentary feast at Vannes before they set out. Dinner over he asked the constable to inspect the castle of La Motte which he had lately restored, strengthened and beautified as a residence for his young wife. Clisson, decoyed into the keep, was seized by armed men, loaded with fetters, and hurried to a dungeon; his followers, surrounded by those of the Duke, were powerless to help him. John even gave orders for his death, but his servants, knowing that when the fit of anger was over their valiant lord would repent of his injustice, delayed execution of the sentence; and they did wisely, as the event proved. Next morning the Duke was in an agony of remorse, nevertheless he greedily accepted the large ransom in the shape of lands and money offered by Clisson's friends.

It was at this time of disturbance that Joanna's eldest child was born at Nantes; to the great disappointment of both parents it was a girl, and only lived a few months; but the Duchess gave promise of soon again becoming a mother, and in 1388 gave birth to a son named John. The ducal family rapidly increased, till the heir of Brittany had nine brothers and sisters, but the young mother can have enjoyed but little real comfort with her family, for her warlike husband could never live at peace with his neighbours.

The moment Clisson was released from captivity he had gone to the French Court with his grievance, and the Regents, naturally incensed that one of the crown vassals should have been the means of rendering abortive an attack on England, severely censured the Duke's conduct; but the haughty John replied defiantly, that "the only thing he repented was that he had not slain Count de Clisson when he had him in his power." War seemed inevitable, but, at the earnest entreaties of his duchess, John submitted, went to Paris, and performed the required homage to young Charles VI.; but it was a duty done grudgingly and as ungraciously as possible, so it is not surprising that the following year John was further accused by the Regents of treasonable correspondence with Richard II. of England, and one of them, the Duke of Berri, actually came himself into Brittany to incite the Duke's vassals to rebellion, while ambassadors were sent from the French court to demand a renewal of homage. The Duke of Brittany, very indignant, with his usual hastiness was about to order the whole embassy to be put to death. His

wife accidentally learnt that he intended thus to violate all the rules of war, perceived at once that his own ruin must inevitably follow such rashness, and broke into his presence with her infants in her arms, imploring him for their sakes to reconsider his decision. The angry Duke could not resist the supplication of his beloved wife, and said, "Lady, how you came by your information I know not, but rather than be the cause of such distress to you, I will revoke my order." The ambassadors were treated with the usual respect, and trouble averted for the time; but not long after John was again in disgrace at the French Court, for harbouring the traitor Pierre de Craon, who had attempted to assassinate Oliver de Clisson. The assassin fled into the territories of John, who refused to give him up. A large army, headed by the King himself, entered Brittany, and the Duke's ruin seemed imminent, but on the road Charles VI. was seized with an attack of his old mental malady and the enterprise abandoned.

From the time her eldest son was born, Joanna had been associated with her husband in the administration of the duchy, that in the event of his death she might be a competent guardian to the young heir.

In 1393 the Duke of Brittany besieged Clisson in the castle of Josselin, and the Viscount Rohan was deputed to plead with the duchess to persuade her lord to raise the siege. Joanna readily undertook to do so, for she was always favourably disposed towards Clisson, and her prayers were again successful. Clisson returned to his allegiance, and paid the Duke the sum of 100,000 golden francs. It is noticeable that in the treaty of peace here made with the Constable and his confederates, Joanna, as though an independent sovereign, agrees "to promise, grant, and swear that she will aid and defend the aforesaid."

The Duke of Brittany aspired to the highest alliances for his children. When but eight years old his eldest son, John, was contracted to the second daughter of the King of France, and in due time the marriage came about; and his eldest daughter ultimately married the Duke d'Alençon, but was at one time affianced to the eldest son of Bolingbroke, who, during his banishment, visited the Court of John, and was received by him with great kindness. Joanna had no idea then that in less than three years her husband's guest would be King of England, and herself the Queen by his side! The Duke of Brittany not only feasted Henry for several days, but he lent him three vessels, full of men-at-arms, to escort him to England. Not many months later the Duke of Brittany died; it is supposed by some that his end was hastened by poison, administered through the agency of Margaret, Countess of Penthievre, the daughter of Clisson, but his loving wife can have believed nothing of this, for after attending her lord in his last illness, and herself closing his eyes, one of her first acts was a complete reconciliation with Clisson.

Her husband had not been long dead when Joanna received a proposal of marriage from Henry IV. In seeking the hand of this comely young widow, the wily monarch did not forget that, thanks to the late Duke, she possessed a handsome independent fortune, whilst he was greatly in need of money; but if he expected to have any hand in the government of the important province of Brittany he was very much mistaken. For two years the Duchess exercised the higher duties of regent with singular prudence and discretion, then she put the young Duke, her son, in possession of his patrimony and left him and the dukedom under the special protection of his relation the Duke of Burgundy, this prince having won her confidence by the handsome gifts he made to herself and her children; for Joanna, it must be confessed, was rather fond of money. John, who was only twelve years old, received knighthood on the occasion of his installation, from his father's former enemy, Clisson.

Before she could marry Henry IV., Joanna had to obtain a permit from the Pope. Now, at this time there was a schism in the Church; Henry acknowledged one pontiff and Joanna the other, but the Duchess had the wit to apply for a dispensation to marry any person she pleased within the fourth degree of consanguinity, and not till after it was granted did Benedict learn that the object of her choice was a partisan of his rival.

The wedding was first performed by proxy on the 3rd of April, 1402, at the palace of Eltham, and it excited some remark that Joanna sent a male representative, one Antoine Riczi, who received the troth of Henry of Lancaster and pledged hers in return.

Joanna now assumed the title of Queen and set out for England, bringing with her only her two youngest children, Blanche and Margaret; the rest of her large family remained under the protection of the French Court, and were taken to Paris for their education. The bride elect sailed from Caramet in January, in an English war-ship commanded by the Earl of Arundel; the King's two half-brothers, the Beauforts, forming part of the escort sent to convey her with all due honour to our shores. The vessels were to have landed their precious freight at Southampton, and Henry's envoys awaited them there, but a tempest arising they were tossed about for five days, and when they did get into harbour it was at Falmouth. King Henry waited with impatience at Winchester, and when at last Joanna arrived the nuptials were celebrated with unusual pomp and splendid festivities in the ancient royal city.

Great preparations were made by the Londoners for Joanna's welcome. It was the citizens of the metropolis who had headed the party which offered Henry IV. the crown, so it behoved them to pay respect to the bride of their elected sovereign. The lord

mayor, aldermen, and city companies, appropriately attired, rode out as far as Blackheath to meet her, and with every demonstration of joy conducted her to the capital. That night the Queen slept at the Tower, and next day, with the same pomp and ceremony, she was led to her residence at the palace of Westminster. Here Henry appointed her the new tower adjoining Westminster Hall, in which to hold her public courts and perform such other duties as devolved on her as queen consort.

The coronation, also, was attended with much splendour; the comely matron (Joanna was at this time about thirty-three, and still very beautiful) was enthroned, not on the same seat with the King, but on a chair of state under a separate canopy; she bore in her hand the orb and cross, and the rich coronation robes became her well.

Joanna's amiable disposition and her administrative talents enabled her to maintain a powerful influence over the King. Henry had shown his judgment in selecting a partner experienced in statecraft; by her friendly but judicious interference the Queen maintained peace with France during the King's lifetime, though war was always ready to break out, and the young Duke of Brittany was too much under the influence of the French Court to be a reliable ally of his mother's husband, even had he inherited his father's sympathies in favour of England. At home, too, this reign was one of continual anxiety, the doubtful title of the sovereign to the crown he wore forming excuse for disturbance among the unruly; in fact, during the ten years that Joanna presided at Court the kingdom was never quite free from rebellion.

Parliament assigned to Queen Joanna the same dower as that of Anne of Bohemia, amounting to ten thousand marks per annum, and Henry also bestowed on her six lead mines in England. This, with her rich continental possessions, should have rendered the Queen very comfortable in money matters, but as we find in one of the state records of the time that "every source of revenue had been anticipated, and it is scarcely possible to imagine a government in greater distress for money," we may safely conclude that Joanna did not devote the whole of her income to her own use. Her enemies have called her avaricious, an accusation perhaps not unfounded, for the expensive wars indulged in by her first husband, and the empty treasury of the second, must have taught this prudent, careful princess the full value of money. The English Parliament, at any rate, expressed dissatisfaction with her expenditure. In 1405 the Commons, now become a powerful voice in the State, petitioned that the Queen "would be pleased to pay for her journeys to the King's houses, as Queen Philippa had been used to do;" but their further cause of grievance against her, and the subject of repeated remonstrance, was the large number of

foreigners which the Queen persisted in retaining in her service. On this account Joanna was never popular with the English.

The Queen had no family by Henry IV., and the children of her former marriage were but little with her. In 1406 she reluctantly gave up her two little daughters, Blanche and Margaret, to their eldest brother, the Duke of Brittany, he having formed marriages for them in order to strengthen his own political position. Two years previous to this Arthur, her second son, visited England to do homage to Henry for the earldom of Richmond, which his mother had induced the King to bestow on him. Some years later Jules of Brittany, Lord of Chantore, arrived in England, but only to die.

With the full sanction and approval of Henry, the Queen caused a splendid alabaster tomb to be prepared by English artists, with a recumbent figure on the top representing the large manly form of John the Valiant, dressed in complete armour. It was conveyed to France and placed in the church of Nantes.

Although Joanna's amiability won the love of all who knew her, she was not quite without domestic annoyance. Being still a graceful and attractive woman, she had other admirers besides the King, some of whom became objects of jealousy to her royal lord. The storm of his fury fell with its greatest violence on an old and faithful adherent, the Duke of York, who had ventured to write an ode in her honour. On some petty pretence he was consigned to prison and kept in confinement for a considerable time; Henry, however, was at length convinced of the groundlessness of his suspicion, and "made amends" by releasing him from captivity and restoring him to his former employments. The discreet conduct of the Queen enabled her to rise above every suspicion and to retain her influence with the King as strong as ever. In his last years King Henry suffered much from the mental worry his position entailed, and his bodily health gave way under it. The King and Queen resided chiefly at Leeds Castle, to be out of reach of the plague, then raging in London; but Henry only escaped this to fall a prey to leprosy, or some disease very much like it, and he also suffered from epilepsy. Early in 1413 his health appeared improved and he returned to Westminster, but, as he was performing his devotions at the shrine of St. Edward in the Abbey, he was seized with another severe fit; he was taken up as dead and removed to the Jerusalem Chamber, but he rallied sufficiently to send for the Prince of Wales and give him his parting advice and his blessing. There is no record that the Queen was with him in his last moments.

Henry IV. was buried in Canterbury Cathedral, and the handsome altar-tomb erected to his memory was made under the direction of Joanna; her statue reposes by the side of

his, as her body does in the vault beneath. But the queen dowager was destined to live many long and sorrowful years before reaching this her last resting-place.

As a step-mother, Joanna's conduct had been most exemplary ; nothing connected with any of Henry's six children is recorded against her, and she had so conducted herself towards his successor, Henry V., that that monarch testified for her his great respect and esteem by trusting her with a share of the government during his expedition to France. The battle of Agincourt, the cause of so much rejoicing to the King and the English nation, brought nothing but pain to her. The record runs : " King Henry despatched a messenger over to England to the Queen-regent with news of his victory, which filled the nation with universal joy. *Te Deum* was sung in all churches, and a mighty procession, consisting of the Queen, prelates, and nobility, with the mayor and corporation of the City of London, walked from St. Paul's to Westminster to return public thanks to Almighty God." Thus Joanna nobly performed her public duty, but in her heart was deep grief ; for the Duke of Alençon, the husband of her eldest daughter, after cleaving the jewelled coronal of her step-son, King Henry, was killed in the battle ; her own brother, Charles of Navarre, died of his wounds next day ; and Arthur of Brittany, Earl of Richmond, was taken prisoner, and his mother knew from the first that the vindictive Henry V. would listen to no prayers of hers on behalf of this son, who was not a mere prisoner of war, but, having sworn fealty to the King of England, was a rebel and a traitor ; he was kept in this country a close prisoner for many years. The Duke of Brittany too had offended the conquering monarch almost as much by his neutrality as he could have done by open enmity, and for some time his mother suffered great anxiety on his account ; but in 1417, Henry V. concluded a treaty with the Duke, as he himself specifies, " at the prayer of Joanna, that most excellent and dear lady, the Queen, our mother."

Unfortunately, Henry did not continue his kind treatment of the queen-mother. Being greatly in want of funds he attempted to obtain money from her by forced loans, and when Joanna resisted this, he cruelly accused her of practising witchcraft against his life. She had never been popular in England, and in those superstitious times such a charge would be believed on the scantiest evidence. Her only accuser was John Randolph, her confessor, but without trial, she, and all such of her household as were suspected, were committed to prison. Joanna was first confined in her own castle of Leeds, but later she was despoiled of all her goods, even to her richer wearing apparel, and committed to solitary confinement at Pevensey, under the custody of Sir John Pelham and a few strange servants. Thus was Joanna a prisoner for the second time in her life.

When she had suffered five years of captivity, Henry V., now threatened with death, was seized with remorse for the injuries he had done his father's widow. The priest, Randolph, had died by violence, so there was no one to withdraw the charge, but Henry, by letter, granted her full restitution of her rights and property, and in the reign of his successor this was confirmed.

After her restoration to liberty and royal station, Joanna still lived many years. Her favourite residence was Havering-atte-Bower, and here she died in 1437, aged sixty-seven. She was buried in Canterbury Cathedral by the side of her royal husband.



A. B. 1511

FRANCIS HALL

KATHERINE OF VALOIS.

Queen of Henry 5th

XVI.

KATHERINE OF VALOIS.

IN the selection of his queen consort our popular, impetuous, and daring Henry V., in no wise departed from his favourite motto, *une sans plus*—one thing at a time; the dream of his life, which he spent his own health and his country's blood and treasure in the effort to realise, was the conquest of France. What more natural than that he should seek to strengthen his hold on the country by a matrimonial alliance with its royal family. Nevertheless, had any other than political considerations been taken into account, a clever far-sighted prince might have hesitated before choosing as the mother of his children Katherine, the fair daughter of Charles VI., who, though his amiable disposition justly earned for him the title of the Well-beloved, possessed a mind so weak that, for the greater part of his life, he was a harmless lunatic. She was the youngest daughter of the twelve children of this unfortunate monarch and his unprincipled queen, Isabella of Bavaria, a princess famed for her beauty and notorious for her vices. The child of a German count and an Italian princess, the French queen had beautiful large lustrous eyes and a rich and clear complexion; these charms Katherine inherited in large measure, while the likeness to her father's family, traceable in the long peculiar nose, was not pronounced enough to mar the general beauty of her face. She was born in October, 1401, at Paris, in the palace of St. Paul, a retired residence belonging to the house of Valois, in which poor Charles was frequently confined during his fits of madness. Here Katherine spent her earliest years, uncared for by her profligate mother, and in a state of dirt and neglect which would disgrace a cottage. The Queen at this time was squandering the royal revenues in company with the King's brother, the Duke of Orleans, and, after his assassination by the Duke of Burgundy, her bad conduct became so notorious, that Charles, in an interval of sanity, ordered her perpetual imprisonment at Tours; she was not allowed to see her children; and Katherine was probably educated at Poissy, in the convent where her elder sister, Maria, became a nun.

We have noticed that Henry, when Prince of Wales, in the early part of his father's

reign, was much in love with Isabella of Valois, the child-widow of Richard II. and elder sister of Katherine. Henry IV. had favoured this suit, which, as we know, was unsuccessful; he had subsequently demanded for his son the hand of the next daughter, Maria, who had taken the veil; and, lastly, at the time of this sovereign's death, his emissary was at Paris making overtures for Katherine the Fair; but the immense dowry of two million crowns which Henry V. on his accession required of King Charles, it was utterly impossible for him to grant; and the suitor further required the restoration of all provinces that had ever been attached to the English crown. During the confusion which prevailed in France after the battle of Agincourt, Isabella of Bavaria escaped from Tours, made the Duke of Burgundy her friend, and on restoration to power, took possession of the person of her youngest daughter. Katherine, now seventeen years of age, quickly acquired a great influence with her mother, and their interests were in a measure identical. The princess had early set her mind on becoming Queen of England. Two out of three of her brothers were now dead, and towards Charles, the survivor, his mother, for some reason, entertained a bitter hatred. Setting aside the interests alike of her brother and her country, Katherine was anxious to unite herself with its greatest enemy, and the Queen did all in her power to further her wishes.

While Henry was besieging Rouen, Isabella sent him a portrait of Katherine, with the question, "whether so beautiful a princess required so great a dowry as he demanded with her?" Although Henry was pleased with the picture, his conquests were daily increasing, and he saw no reason to diminish the sum he required of his adversary.

But Isabella would not let the matter drop. She obtained a truce with Henry, now advanced to Melun, and arranged a conference between the two courts at the Bridge of Ponthoise. A suitable spot was enclosed, and handsome tents draped with velvet pitched on either side of it for the accommodation and refreshment of the French and the English. Hither the Queen led the Princess Katherine, accompanied by the Duke of Burgundy, the members of the council, and a thousand knights. "Soon after the King of England arrived, attended by his brothers, the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester, and a thousand men-at-arms. He entered the tent that had been pitched for him, as the others had done, and when they were about to commence the conference, the Queen on the right hand, followed by the Lady Katherine, the Duke of Burgundy, and the Count de St. Pol, entered the enclosure. In like manner did the King of England, with his brothers and council, by another opening; and, with a most respectful obeisance, saluted the Queen and then kissed her and the Lady Katherine. After this the Duke of Burgundy saluted the King, bending his knee a little and inclining his head; but Henry

took him by the hand, embraced him, and showed him great respect. After they had remained in conference a long time, they separated, taking most respectful leave of each other.

“On the morrow three weeks they again met there, and remained together for several days in the same state, and with the same number of persons as before, with the exception of the Lady Katherine, who had been brought the first time that the King of England might see her.”

Still, in spite of the maiden's charms, Henry was inexorable on the subject of dowry; and the French council would not, or could not, comply with his exorbitant demands. The English king requested a third interview at the Bridge of Ponthoise; but when he arrived at the place, it was only to find the tents struck, and scarcely a sign of the gorgeous encampment left on the spot. That Henry was now personally anxious for the match appears in his irritable indignant speech to the Duke of Burgundy, the only one of the French royal family who had attended. “Fair cousin, we wish you to know we will have the daughter of your King and all we have asked, or we will drive him and you out of the kingdom.” The Duke's spirited answer shows that at least he was still a patriot and a soldier: “Sire, you are pleased to say so; but before you can drive my lord and me out of his kingdom, I make no doubt that you will be heartily tired.”

But the Duke of Burgundy had not counted on the strength of the factions which were tearing his unhappy country, or on the uncertainty of human life. Very shortly after this he was assassinated by the Dauphin, and his son Philip, who succeeded immediately to his father's wealth and power, thought more of avenging his private injury—the death of his sire—than of the public good of his country. He allied himself with Queen Isabella and with the English. One immediate consequence of this was that no further obstacle was placed in the way of King Henry's marriage.

At length it was concluded, by favour of the Duke of Burgundy and his party, that Charles, King of France, should give to Henry, King of England, his youngest daughter, Katherine, in marriage, and, in consequence of this alliance, should make him and his heirs successors to the throne of France after his decease; thus disinheriting his own son and heir, Charles, Duke of Touraine, the Dauphin, and annulling that principle of the constitution which had been, with great deliberation, resolved on by former kings and peers of France—namely, that it should never be governed or inherited by a female, or anyone descended from the female line. The King of France also agreed, that should Henry have no issue by this marriage, he and his heirs were to remain successors to the crown of France. In concluding this passage, our authority gives this sad and only

possible excuse for so infamous a treaty: "All this was granted by King Charles; but, to say truth, he had not for some time past been in his right senses."

Shakespeare, in his celebrated play of *Henry the Fifth*, gives an excellent rendering of the hero's sentiments regarding France.

"*Katherine*. Is it possible that I should love the enemy of France."

"*Henry*. No, it is not possible that you should love the enemy of France, Kate; but, in loving me, you should love the friend of France: for I love France so well, that I will not part with a single village of it: I will have it all mine; and, Kate, when France is mine, and I am yours, then yours is France, and you are mine."

The terms of the treaty of marriage were no sooner decided on than Henry set out from Rouen, with the Dukes of Gloucester and Clarence, his brothers, and the flower of the English nobility; about sixteen hundred combatants, the greater part of whom were archers, formed the escort, and most of these were left at Charenton to guard the bridge while the King and his lords advanced to Troyes, in Champagne. Here Duke Philip of Burgundy, in deep mourning for his murdered father, came out to meet Henry, and conducted him with all respect and ceremony to the lodging prepared for him. The next day, in the Church of St. Denis, where Queen Isabella and Katherine sat in state, the peace was signed, and immediately afterwards Henry betrothed the Princess, placing on her finger a priceless ring, and, as part of the ceremony, he presented to his *fiancée* his favourite knight, Sir L. de Robsart, as her personal guard and defender. On the very next day, Trinity Sunday, the wedding took place. Henry carefully conformed to all the French bridal customs. The Archbishop of Lens blessed Queen Katherine's bed, and a grand procession came during the night to the bedside of the newly-married couple, offering them soup and wine. "Great pomp and magnificence were displayed by the King of England and his princes, as if he were at that moment king of all the world."

But far from being "king of all the world," Henry was not yet in reality king of all France. Instead of the tournaments which usually followed state ceremonies in those days, Henry and Katherine hurried to the scene of real fighting. Within a fortnight of his wedding, King Henry butchered the whole garrison of Montereau, because it had held out gallantly for the Dauphin, and the sieges of Sens and Melun followed in quick succession.

Katherine, attended by the Duchess of Clarence and other noble English ladies, resided for a time at Corbeil; her mother was with her, and after a time poor Charles was brought to the camp that the people of Melun might be enticed to surrender as if to their own sovereign; they replied, that they would cheerfully throw open the gates to

him, but that they would never pay obedience to a King of England, the ancient deadly enemy of France; but Charles continued to dwell in the camp under the charge of his son-in-law; the unfortunate monarch is described as always amiable with those nearest him at the moment, ever ready to see with their eyes and adopt their opinions as his own. Monstrelet, the historian, says, "It was a sorry sight to see him now, bereft of all his state and pomp; but Isabella was grandly attended by ladies and damsels, and in company with Queen Katherine remained for about a month in a house which Henry had erected for them near to his tents, but far enough from the town to prevent the cannon from annoying them. Every day, at sunrise and nightfall, eight or ten clarions and divers other instruments played most melodiously for an hour before their dwelling. In truth, the King of England was more magnificent during this siege than any other during his reign." There is no evidence that the young Queen, absorbed in the pleasures of her new position, once gave a thought to the sorrows of her unhappy country.

When the siege of Melun was over, the royalty of both countries made a triumphal entry into Paris. Henry rode first with King Charles at his side, and they were met by processions of the clergy bearing the holy relics to be kissed by the two Kings, while choirs, stationed at intervals, sang carols in their honour. Next day the two Queens entered the capital. "Great magnificence was displayed at the arrival of the Queen of England; but it would take too much time to relate all the rich presents that were offered to her by the citizens of Paris. The streets and houses were hung with tapestry the whole of that day, and wine was constantly running from brass cocks and in conduits through the squares, so that all persons might have in abundance; and more rejoicings than tongue can tell were made in Paris for the peace and for the marriage of Katherine the Fair."

The King of England and his Queen took up their abode in the Palace of the Louvre, where they kept up great state; but King Charles was lodged in the Palace of St. Paul, with a very small and mean retinue. After Christmas, Henry conducted his bride to England, leaving Isabella, whom he believed devoted to Katherine's interest, as regent during his absence.

The King and Queen landed at Dover in February, 1420, and Katherine was the same month crowned at Westminster Abbey, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, with splendour befitting the mighty conqueror, her lord. Among the distinguished guests at the subsequent banquet in Westminster Hall was James I., the prisoner king of Scotland. Sir James Steward, as he was called, sat under a separate canopy, and was served from silver

dishes, but after the archbishops. This unlucky monarch had passed his boyhood in captivity in England; the late King had given him a good education, and he was a poet of no mean powers. The gallant and accomplished young Scotchman won the sympathy of the new Queen; as a mark of favour she first presented him with the golden cup with which he served her, and then publicly entreated her royal husband to grant him his liberty. Henry could not, at such a moment, refuse his bride's request; but the condition attached is characteristic of our warlike King, and one that might easily be guessed, the prisoner must bear arms under England's banner in the ensuing campaign against France. Perhaps what first aroused in Katherine's breast an interest in James was the story well known at Court of his vehement but almost hopeless passion for the lovely Joanna Beaufort, whom he had watched walking in the gardens of Windsor Castle while he was confined in the keep far above. At any rate, the Queen furthered his love affairs too, and before the coronation festivities were over, he was actually betrothed to the object of his affection. We regret to say that this is the only recorded instance in which Katherine showed active kindness.

The coronation over, Henry left the Queen and made a royal martial progress through the country. At the principal towns he explained with much eloquence what grand deeds he had already performed through his prowess in France, and what yet remained to be done for the complete conquest of the kingdom—namely, the subjugation of his adversary the Dauphin of Vienne, who still kept possession of part of the country; and he concluded his addresses by saying there were but two things wanted for the entire conquest of the country, money and men. Such was the enthusiasm excited, that from all parts these requisites were liberally granted: thus did a popular King readily raise supplies which a parliament would not have granted him.

Henry had arranged to return to Windsor, where the Queen was residing, in time for Easter; but, finding himself delayed, he sent for her to Leicester, and both came back to Westminster in May. News, however, soon reached England of the disastrous battle of Baugé, and the death of the King's brother, the Duke of Clarence; and Henry hurried on the Continent with four thousand men-at-arms. He was still engaged in battles and sieges when news was brought to him at Meaux of the accouchement of Katherine, whom he had left behind him in England, of a son and heir to the two kingdoms. It is curious that Henry, before quitting England, had strictly enjoined the Queen not to let the expected heir be born at Windsor. This accomplished sovereign, who had studied diligently at Oxford in his youth, was skilled in astrology, and apparently placed faith in a prophecy concerning the Kings of England, that Henry of

Monmouth (himself) should reign a short time and get much, and that a Henry of Windsor (presumably his son) should reign long and lose all. Why Queen Katherine disobeyed the orders of her lord history does not explain.

It was at this time that Joanna of Navarre, the unfortunate queen-dowager, was cast into prison; a part of the revenue her step-son seized he appropriated to the use of Queen Katherine; for although the covetous Henry had, previous to marriage with the French Princess, demanded so enormous a dowry, yet, as a matter of fact, she received but a small sum from her royal father, and that was very irregularly paid. Also, at this time no provision was assigned to her by the English Parliament; so, in spite of the ostentatious display made by Henry, Katherine was one of the poorest of our queens.

A few months after the birth of her son, Katherine joined her husband in France. "She arrived at Harfleur in grand state, attended by ladies without number, and escorted by a large fleet filled with men-at-arms and archers under command of the Duke of Bedford, brother to the King." The infant prince was left at Windsor in charge of the Duke of Gloucester. "On landing, Katherine proceeded to Rouen and thence to Vincennes, to meet the King. Henry departed from Meaux (which had lately surrendered) with his friends to meet her, and she was received by them as if she had been an angel from Heaven." Great were the rejoicings of the King and Queen of France for the happy return of their daughter, and brilliant receptions were held in Paris to exhibit the splendour of the King and Queen of England. "All the Parisians went to see their princess and her lord sitting enthroned, crowned with their most precious diadems; but, as no meat and drink was offered to the populace, they went away discontented: for when of old the Kings of France kept open court, much good cheer was freely given to all comers."

But Queen Katherine's splendour was not to last much longer. Already the valiant Henry was suffering from the disease which brought him so early to the grave. But he resisted the bodily weakness as long as possible; from Paris the Court removed to Senlis; hence Henry, trying to forget his sufferings in the excitement of war, hurried from place to place. He was at Compiègne when he learned of a conspiracy formed in Paris to betray the city into the hands of the Dauphin. After detecting and punishing the conspirators, he returned to his queen at Senlis, most anxious to join his army before the day on which his friend, the Duke of Burgundy, expected to give battle to the Dauphin. He started in a litter; but, daily growing weaker, he was forced to come back to Katherine and the King and Queen of France, who had removed for safety to the castle of Vincennes. Here, but a few days after, he died, attended in his

last moments by his wife, whose grief was most violent. Some of the latest words he spoke, addressed to the Duke of Bedford, were, "Comfort my dear wife, the most afflicted creature living." Monstrelet says: "Thus ended the life of King Henry, in the flower of his age; for when he died he was but forty years old. He was very wise and able in every business he undertook, and of a determined character. It is true he was so feared by his princes and captains, that none dared to disobey his orders, however nearly related to him; in this state of obedience were his subjects of France and of England; and the principal cause was, that if any person transgressed his ordinances, he had been instantly punished without favour or mercy."

To his young Queen, Henry had been the most affectionate of husbands, and well might she mourn his loss; this she did in her own demonstrative way, by causing his funeral obsequies to be solemnised with great pomp, herself following the funeral procession as it slowly made its way from Paris to London. The body of the King was laid in a chariot drawn by four great horses. There was also a figure dressed to resemble him in royal state, in purple and ermine, crowned and bearing the sceptre and globe in its hand. The effigy of the warrior king was placed over the corpse in a splendid bed in the chariot, and open to public view; as it passed through the various towns on the route, a magnificent canopy was held over it by men of note. The King of Scots attended as chief mourner, besides a vast number of nobles and captains of renown. Around the bier were four hundred men-at-arms in black armour with reversed lances. At a mile's distance followed Queen Katherine, with a vast retinue, keeping always within sight of the great wax torches which accompanied the procession. Equal honour was shown to the royal remains after they reached the English shores, and in London, which the procession reached presumably after dark, a brilliant effect was produced by the appearance of each citizen standing at his door with a lighted torch while the mournful cortège approached and passed. The Queen's sad demeanour gave much satisfaction to the Londoners; they were also pleased with the magnificent tomb she caused to be raised in his honour, with his image in silver gilt on the top.

The King died in August, 1422, Katherine being only twenty-one years of age at the time. Her father survived his son-in-law only two months, and at his death it was to the Queen of England and the infant King that the Parisians sent an embassy entreating that they would send to France, without delay, an army strong enough to check the daily advancing party of the Dauphin, who now assumed the title of the King of France. The young widow received the envoys with great honour, and promised them speedy and effectual succour: she seems never to have regarded the

Dauphin with any sisterly feelings. For the next three years she occupied an exalted position as queen-mother to the infant Henry VI., appearing in public, on state occasions, with the royal babe in her lap; but later there is no mention of her in state papers for thirteen years. The reason of her sudden disappearance from public life was her marriage with Owen Tudor, a Welshman, who, though he claimed descent from the princely line of Cadwallader, was certainly an uneducated person, but very handsome and of undoubted bravery. He had done good service for Henry V. as a common soldier in the Welsh contingent at Agincourt, and for his personal prowess Henry had made him *armiger*, or squire of his body, and this office he continued to hold about the person of the infant King. Owen was in this position at Windsor when he attracted the notice of the Queen. Being called upon to dance before the Court, in the intricacies of the performance he lost his balance, and before he could recover himself he had fallen into the Queen's lap, as she sat in a low seat among her ladies; the extremely good-natured manner in which she excused this awkwardness first raised a suspicion among her attendants of her liking for him.

There is no record of the marriage between Queen Katherine and Owen Tudor; but, although it gave the greatest offence to the late King's courtiers, and especially the Duke of Gloucester, who had been appointed protector, no question of its validity seems ever to have been raised, or of the legitimacy of the four children of the union. It was kept as profound a secret as possible by Katherine; and on the first suspicion, not of the marriage, but of the danger of it, a severe statute was enacted, in the sixth year of her son's reign, forbidding any one, under heavy penalties, to marry a queen-dowager or any lady holding lands of the crown, without the consent of the King and his council. Before this time Parliament had granted Katherine a suitable sum for her maintenance; and all the dower castles of the Queen Consorts except Havering-atte-Bower and Langley reserved for Joanna of Navarre, who was still living.

Katherine's second marriage was never recognised by the Government; she always styled herself the widow of Henry V., and her son, Henry VI., never acknowledged Owen Tudor as his father-in-law, though he received him into considerable favour, and raised two out of the three sons of Tudor and Katherine to rank and fortune.

So carefully was the marriage concealed that no public notice was taken of it till the year 1436, when Katherine was forced to part from her husband, and seek refuge in Bermondsey Abbey, while Tudor was thrown into Newgate; the two elder boys were entrusted, by order of the council, to the care of the Abbess of Barking; the third son, born at Westminster, was reared in the monastery there and became a

monk, and the daughter, Margaret, the latest born, had only lived a few days. The whole Court looked coldly on the Queen for uniting herself with a person of such mean degree; but the Protector was her bitterest enemy. "The high spirit of the Duke of Gloucester could not brook her marriage. Neither the beauty of Tudor's person, nor his genealogy—deduced from Cadwallader kings—could shield him or the Queen from a sharp persecution as soon as the match was discovered." This cruel persecution appears to have broken Katherine's spirit: already in delicate health, she became very ill, and in her weakness and dejection grievously laid to heart her perverseness in having disobeyed the express injunction of her royal husband, and given birth to Henry VI. at Windsor. Gay and light-hearted in youth, in later years superstition tormented her mind. A few days before her death she dictated a will, addressed to the King; it was full of melancholy and evil foreboding; the disasters foretold for her royal son were already overshadowing him; the English had evacuated Paris, and were losing town after town in France, and matters in England were in anything but a satisfactory state.

In her will, Katherine expressed great anxiety as to the payment of her debts, and the masses to be said for the repose of her soul; but though she leaves legacies to her servants, she makes no mention whatever of Owen Tudor and her children, except what we may understand as referring to a private arrangement with the King, whom she begs to act "according to his noble discretion and her intents." She died, February, 1437, but a few months after her entrance to Bermondsey Abbey, and was buried with all due honour in the Lady Chapel, Westminster.

After his wife's death, Owen Tudor escaped from Newgate and retired into Wales. A summons from the council to come into the King's presence, accompanied by a safe-conduct, induced Tudor to return to London; but his enemy, the Duke of Gloucester, caused him to be treacherously seized and confined, first in Wallingford Castle and then in Newgate. From this prison he again made his escape to his native mountains. Henry VI., when he attained his majority, allowed him a small annuity out of his privy purse, and later created him keeper of the royal parks in Wales. When he was himself in trouble with the house of York, Owen drew his good sword for his stepson, and, refusing to quit the field after the lost battle of Mortimer's Cross, he was captured by the rebels and beheaded in Hereford market-place.

Henry VI. caused the Queen's sons to be carefully educated; Edmund, the elder, he created Duke of Richmond, with precedence over all other English peers; and secured for his wife the beautiful Margaret Beaufort, heiress of the house of Somerset. He died

before he was one-and-twenty, but left an infant son, who became Henry VII. Jasper Tudor, Katherine's second son, was made Earl of Pembroke.

Henry VI. caused a magnificent tomb to be raised over Katherine's remains in Westminster Abbey, with a long epitaph in Latin in praise of her virtues. As she was described as the *widow* of Henry VI., her grandson Henry VII., when he came to the throne, demolished this tomb; but the remains of his grandmother were deposited in the magnificent and celebrated chapel erected by him. When this King in his turn was buried, the remains of Katherine were exhumed and remained above ground till the beginning of the present century; being in a remarkable state of preservation, the body was exhibited as a curiosity to those who visited Westminster Abbey.

XVII.

MARGARET OF ANJOU.

IN the month of April, 1445, Henry VI. went in state from London into Hampshire; and at Southwick, near Fareham, awaited the arrival of his bride from beyond the sea. This quiet, accomplished, refined young man of twenty-four years of age, had some time previously expressed his "earnest desire to enter into the holy state of matrimony." The Princess Margaret, already wedded to him by proxy, arrived in the charge of the elderly Marquis and Marchioness of Suffolk. The voyage had been rough, and the Queen, as she was already styled, was weak and suffering when the vessels reached Portsmouth, just in time to avoid a terrific storm. Margaret was carried on shore in the arms of Suffolk and lodged at a religious house, but next day she was taken by boat to Southampton, and instead of recovering from the effects of the sea passage she sickened with small-pox. The disease must have attacked her in a very slight form, for ten days later, April 22nd, she was sufficiently recovered to be wedded to the King in Tichfield Abbey.

We must now look back and see how this marriage came about, and say something of the early years of Margaret of Anjou.

Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, who had long occupied the office of Protector to the King, his nephew, still had great influence in the government; to his power was opposed Henry's great-uncle, the talented Cardinal Beaufort. Each designed to form the matrimonial alliance for the King most to the advantage of his own faction. Gloucester had, two years previously, induced the monarch to open negotiations with the Count of Armagne for the hand of one of his three daughters, but young Henry contended that before finally deciding, he must have faithful portraits of the ladies painted for him to judge of their beauty. The painter advanced but slowly with his work,—perhaps some secret influence retarded his progress; and meantime some one at the English court—a knight of Anjou, prisoner on parole, with whom Henry frequently conversed—suggested to the monarch that there was no princess in Europe to compare in beauty or talent with Margaret, the second daughter of René of Anjou. That Beaufort was behind the scenes is more than probable, for, after



A. B. 1511

W. J. 1511

MARGARET OF ANJOU.

Queen of Henry 6th.

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the aforesaid knight had twice been sent by Henry on a private mission, to make inquiries respecting the lady, it was Suffolk, a man entirely under the Cardinal's influence, who was employed to treat with her parents and bring the illustrious lady home.

And now, of Margaret herself; she was the daughter of René of Anjou, who afterwards succeeded to the title of King of Sicily and Jerusalem; her mother, Isabella of Lorraine, a princess of the house of Charlemagne, was as spirited as she was beautiful, inheriting from her mother, Yoland of Arragon, fiery Spanish blood and indomitable courage. These qualities were transmitted in large measure to our heroine. Margaret's mother need have been high-spirited, for her life was one long struggle to uphold the rights of her husband and children against numerous enemies, and she was continually harassed by pecuniary difficulties. Her father was talented and accomplished, but effeminate, and quite unfitted to protect his own in an age of lawless disorder.

Margaret was the youngest child, born in Lorraine in 1422, at Pont-à-Mousson, where her mother was anxiously awaiting the result of a battle in which René was engaged, struggling for the possession of Lorraine with Anthony of Vaudemont. Fugitives from the field came to Isabella announcing the loss of the battle and their leader a prisoner to his enemy. The distressed wife, with her little children, sought an interview with King Charles VII., beseeching his aid and intervention. Thus early did Margaret appear in public, a fitting beginning to an eventful childhood and the stormy life she was destined to lead as the wife of Henry VII. Long did her father remain in his prison in the high tower of Dijon, and while he beguiled the time with painting miniatures on glass, his wife succeeded in obtaining a truce from the enemy. But not even the betrothal of Yolande, the elder daughter, to Vaudemont's heir, nor the surrender of the two eldest sons as hostages, could obtain for René more than a temporary release from captivity. Money for his ransom could not be found. Margaret lived with her mother at Nancy for a time, then they moved to Tarascon, on the banks of the Rhone. From hence they were driven by the much-dreaded plague to Marseilles. Isabella led her little ones to Naples that she might take up the succession to the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, now inherited by her captive lord; but as the plague was found to be even more virulent there the family resided at Capua, but the royal children took part in their absent father's proclamation ceremony. In Italy Margaret shared the advantage of her brother Louis' clever tutor, Antoine de Salle; so like all Provençal princesses was well instructed in poetry and the arts. For two years before her wedding Margaret had lived, or been a frequent visitor, at the French court, and her charms and accomplishments were well known there when the Marquis of Suffolk came over to negotiate the marriage. Cardinal Beaufort must have been well aware that she

possessed just that enterprising temper, courageous spirit, and solidity as well as vivacity of understanding, which King Henry lacked, and he thought that as she was quite young—only fifteen—he could mould her character and employ her talents for his own ends.

A truce with France for two years was a necessary preliminary to the marriage. Charles VII. was gratified at any step likely to promote peace between his country and England, and with his wife, Margaret's aunt, took a personal interest in her welfare. When René was asked for his formal consent he replied that, "it would be inconsistent with his honour to bestow his daughter in marriage on the usurper of his hereditary dominions, Anjou and Maine;" and the King of France seconded his demand for their restoration. Henry being at the same time informed that a prince of the house of Burgundy was much attached to the princess, and likely to be a successful rival, he readily relinquished the provinces which his ancestors had obtained with so hard a struggle. The wedding by proxy was celebrated at Nancy, November, 1444, the Bishop of Toul performing the ceremony in the church of St. Martin, in presence of the King and Queen of France, the bride's parents, and a brilliant company of lords and ladies; for the festivities were to be kept up a whole week, and a grand tournament was held in which both kings set the example of entering the lists. The daisy flower, which Margaret chose as her emblem, formed the garlands worn by the knights in honour of the bride. A touch of real romance was lent to these festivities when Lord Ferry, son of Count Vaudemont, with a party of young men forcibly carried off Margaret's elder sister, Yolande, and married her. The pair had been betrothed for many years and were fondly attached, but King René always deferred consent to his daughter's marriage with the son of "his dearest foe." Now he was at first as angry as so mild a man could be, but as all present pleaded for the lovers, the disgraced couple were restored to favour and took part in the tournament during the last days. The leave-taking between Margaret and her relations is described by all historians as most pathetic; never was young princess so beloved. King René and Queen Isabella accompanied their daughter as far as Bar le Duc, and there "took leave of her with floods of tears and prayers for their welfare." From her kind aunt, and her uncle, the King of France, whom she was destined never to see again, she had parted previously; "with many tears they recommended her to the protection of God; their grief was so great that they could not speak."

Queen Margaret brought no dowry to England; indeed, from the impoverished parents none had been asked, and her wardrobe was so scantily furnished that we find by the state records one of the first things King Henry did on her arrival was to summon an English dressmaker from London to wait upon his bride. Henry himself was obliged to pawn some

valuable jewellery to defray the expense of the bridal procession from Southampton to London.

The young queen was met by difficulties from the outset of her married life; unpopularity preceded her, for she brought no money into the country; but in a measure she overcame this drawback. All who saw her were delighted with her youthful beauty and charming manners, and it soon became the fashion among the nobility to wear her emblem, the daisy, or Marguerite. Even Gloucester, whose near relationship to the crown demanded a due amount of courtesy, to show honour to the new sovereign came as far as Blackheath to meet her, and next day conducted her in triumph to London, "attended by the mayor, aldermen, and sheriffs of the city, and the crafts of the same on horseback." Another tournament following the coronation ceremony completed the celebration of the event, which was distinguished by a costly magnificence and display hardly justified by the empty state of the exchequer.

In the pages of the "*Fœdera*" we find this record—"The natures of this married couple were, if not opposite, sufficiently differing; the husband was of a womanish inclination—the wife of a manlike spirit; the King was humble, devout, spiritually given, caring only for his soul's health; the Queen was proud, ambitious, worldly-given, and not to be quieted till, having brought the kingdom to be ruled as she pleased, she might see herself free from rivals in the Government. The Duke of Gloucester was no ways pleasing to her, as well for that he had opposed her marriage—an injury not to be forgotten—as likewise that her husband, being long since out of his minority, was still governed by him as formerly when he was under age."

From the beginning of her career Margaret took a part in public affairs utterly out of her province as queen-consort: still we cannot blame her for this; the capable, clear-sighted woman was married to a man who must be dependent upon some one for guidance; she found herself at once possessed of unbounded influence over him. The council was divided into two factions; in her youth and ignorance she must lean for support on a man of years and experience on one side or the other. Cardinal Beaufort had helped her towards her present exalted position; he was rich, and always ready to accommodate the King and Queen in pecuniary difficulties; and to him she took a personal liking, frequently paying him friendly visits at his house in Waltham Forest: here the cardinal placed at her disposal a room furnished most luxuriously with hangings of cloth of gold of Damascus.

Towards Humphrey of Gloucester, on the other hand, she had no cause for gratitude; and for a young passionate princess, it would have been quite enough that he was the

deadly enemy of her friend the cardinal; but the haughty Duke also stood next in succession to the throne, and had a powerful following in the country.

In the truce made with France for two years, the clause for the cession of Anjou and Maine (the key of Normandy) was kept secret from Parliament; but the time for fulfilling its conditions approached, and the unpopularity of the measure with the nation was a certainty. It was evident to Beaufort and his party that, so long as Gloucester opposed the relinquishment of Maine as a measure most impolitic and fraught with fatal issue to the best interests of the crown, there could be no prospect of success, and therefore the removal of this powerful opponent of his public plans and the object alike of his undying hatred, even by the foul means of treachery and murder, did not appal the unrelenting cardinal. The Parliament was summoned to meet at Bury, and the King and Queen proceeded thither; the Duke of Gloucester, who had lately been removed from his office of Regent of France, was now suddenly seized on the charge of high treason, and placed in confinement. It is supposed that he had begun to correspond with the Duke of York, who, being descended from an elder son of Edward III., had really a better claim to the throne than any of the house of Lancaster. However, Gloucester was not brought before Parliament for trial, and seventeen days after his arrest he was found dead in his bed. No marks of violence appeared on his body, which was publicly exhibited, to show there was no treachery in the matter; but this in itself is suspicious; and though no evidence was ever forthcoming, a belief in the presence of foul play was general. Beaufort of course was pointed at, and the common people were easily induced to believe that Margaret was implicated; but we readily avail ourselves of the discrepancies of historians upon this point to exonerate the young Queen from participation in so horrible a tragedy.

Cardinal Beaufort, "a prelate much more proper for the world than the church," survived his rival but two months; and, after his death, Margaret placed her confidence in Suffolk, whom she created a Duke. On them fell the odium of the cession of Maine and Anjou; the Queen became still more unpopular as supporting the claims of her relatives against the interests of England. The King and Queen were both desirous of seeing peace in the land; but the people were too unsettled to profit by peace, and war with France was renewed at the expiration of the truce. Margaret was reviled as "the Frenchwoman," and Suffolk as "the favourite."

The French, who had diligently recruited their forces during the short peace, now conquered town after town in Normandy. Popular indignation found a victim in the Duke of Suffolk. In vain did he speak boldly before Parliament of his long and blameless

public service at home and abroad; his destruction was determined on, and he was thrust into the Tower. The Queen, unable to screen him in any other way, suggested his temporary banishment, and furthered his escape to France. At the moment when he imagined himself safe—perhaps from superstitious reliance upon the verity of a prediction which had declared that he should die in the Tower—he was intercepted near Dover, in a vessel called “*St. Nicholas of the Tower*,” by emissaries sent to destroy him: his head was struck off, and his body thrown into the sea. Neither do we find that “any inquiry was made into the accomplices of this deed,” though we may well conceive that Margaret deeply deplored the loss of this her first English friend. Previous to this the Queen had, as she thought, removed an enemy out of harm’s way when she caused Richard, Duke of York, to be appointed Governor of Ireland; but in reality she only increased his political power. He was a prince of unusual valour and abilities, distinguished himself by the skill and credit of his administration, and “so assuaged the fury of the wild and savage people, that he won such favour among them as could never be separated from him and his lineage.” By alliance with the houses of Mortimer and Neville, his family had secured great wealth and many powerful allies. While Richard was out of the country, his followers could work for him with the greater security; they did not fail to point out before Parliament “that the King was fitter for a cloister than the throne, and had in a manner deposed himself by leaving his affairs in the hands of a woman, who merely used his name to conceal her usurpation, since by English law a queen-consort had no power, but title only.”

Disasters in France, added to poverty and pestilence at home, made it an easy task for the partisans of York to ferment a popular insurrection. Jack Cade and his assemblage of countrymen were advancing towards London when Henry and Margaret came out to meet them. Both parties became alarmed; the insurgents began to retreat, and the Queen, as yet unaccustomed to bloodshed, fearing for the safety of the King’s person, advised him to retire from Blackheath to London, leaving the task of pursuing Cade to his generals. This step was fatal, the rebels took courage, and, defeating the royal troops with great slaughter, soon entered London. Their majesties took refuge at Kenilworth; nor was peace restored until, by the intervention of Kempe, Archbishop of York, and Chancery, certain conditions had been allowed to the rebels, prior to their laying down arms; Cade alone was punished with death.

Margaret’s next selection of a minister was not more fortunate. The Duke of Somerset, in whom she reposed much confidence, was most unpopular with the nation on account of his losses in France; and the Queen’s reckless avowal of her favour towards him attracted

towards herself much comment and censure. The title of the disastrous War of the Roses, soon to overtake the country, is said to have originated in a quarrel between Somerset and the Earl of Warwick, the ally of the House of York. The first public dispute took place in the Temple Gardens; Somerset plucked a red rose and Warwick a white one, calling on the bystanders to declare their party by choice of a flower. Margaret wore the Red Rose at first, out of compliment to Somerset, but it was soon adopted as the Lancastrian badge.

At this juncture, Richard, Duke of York, took the liberty of returning from his Irish post without permission. Henry, advised by his consort, opposed his landing, but the Duke easily effected his purpose at another port, and was soon marching to London with ten thousand armed men. On his arrival he demanded, not the throne, but the dismissal and imprisonment of Somerset. Compliance was promised, and Richard was granted an interview with the King; but Margaret had secreted the offending lord behind the arras of the royal pavilion that he might overhear the conversation. The terms of abuse in which York spoke of him to Henry irritated Somerset to such a pitch that he forgot his rôle of eavesdropper, and rushing forth, confronted his accuser with drawn sword, to the no small amazement of the Duke and the King's discredit. The scene terminated in the arrest of York, but a few days later Somerset was conveyed to the Tower, and York permitted to retire into his own domains in Wales.

Meanwhile affairs on the Continent were going as hardly as possible with England. The Queen managed to get together enough money to dispatch Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, a soldier peer of ability and military renown, to Guienne, with a small force, to the succour of the English there; but the country was in no condition to sustain the expense of foreign war against united France. Talbot, at eighty years of age, fell before the overwhelming forces of the enemy, and nearly all his followers perished at the same time. In him the Queen lost a devoted adherent.

And now, when disaster had overtaken each of her ministers in succession, Margaret was most in need of wise and friendly counsel. King Henry's health, both of body and mind, which had long been feeble, entirely gave way. He fell sick at Clarendon, in Wiltshire, and did not appear to recognise even his much-loved wife. The Queen was forced to take the lead in a council of prelates and nobles, for the good government of the realm, at a time when her condition demanded freedom from care, for now in the ninth year of her married life, Margaret promised to become a mother. In October, 1453, her only child, Prince Edward, first saw the light at Westminster, where his father was lying unconscious on his bed of sickness.

From this date Margaret exhibited towards her enemies the spirit of a tigress defending her young. The birth of an heir only increased her difficulties. The Duke of York might have awaited with patience the death of a sickly king before laying claim to the throne ; now the house of Lancaster had a hope beyond him. The Yorkists resorted to the meanest measures ; trading on the unpopularity of the Queen they cast doubts on the legitimacy of the Prince, declaring either that Margaret's child had died and been substituted by some low-born babe, or that young Edward was her son by the Duke of Somerset,—a most unlikely tale, for the King and his consort lived on the most affectionate terms, and Somerset was a most unsuitable paramour for the youthful Queen, being quite advanced in years, with sons older than she was. Strength was given to this groundless accusation in the minds of the superstitious by the following anecdote. It had been the custom from time immemorial for the King of England, on the birth of the heir, to take the babe in his arms, pronounce his blessing upon it, and present it to the nobles as his acknowledged son and successor. The infant Edward was carried to King Henry in due form, and because the afflicted monarch, blind and deaf to all around him, failed to take any notice of the child, it was said that he refused to recognise it as his own.

At this crisis Margaret was obliged to submit to the re-imprisonment of Somerset, who was sent to the Tower, "where he kept his Christmas without great solemnity," and the appointment by Parliament of the Duke of York, "protector and defender of the King during the King's pleasure, or until such time as Edward the Prince should come to years of discretion." It was nearly two years before Henry recovered his reason ; his mental affliction seems to have been almost precisely similar to that of his maternal grandfather, Charles VI. of France, the disorder of the brain leaving the sufferer perfectly sane in the interval, but liable to a relapse under strong excitement or over-fatigue. Returned to his right mind, Henry immediately resumed authority, and by the Queen's advice dissolved Parliament and released Somerset. The Duke of York now gathered his followers in Wales and appeared in open hostility to his sovereign : he encountered the royalists at St. Albans, Somerset was killed in the battle, and Henry himself, slightly wounded, was taken prisoner. The engagement had lasted but an hour, but is memorable as the first blood spilt in that fatal quarrel, which was not finished in less than a course of thirty years, which was signalised by twelve pitched battles, opened a scene of extraordinary fierceness and cruelty, is computed to have cost the lives of eighty princes of the blood, and almost entirely annihilated the ancient nobility of England.

During the battle of St. Albans Margaret was at Greenwich with the infant prince, and as, after the excitement of the fight Henry was again afflicted with mental derangement, the

Duke of York exercised the royal prerogative in the King's name, entrusting the care of the sovereign's person to his devoted consort.

But while seemingly absorbed in wifely and maternal duties, Margaret employed her energies secretly but surely against her opponents by promoting division in the council, and gathering round her partizans of the house of Lancaster. Many of the lords and gentlemen of distinction slain in the late battle had left sons anxious to avenge them. Henry Beaufort, heir of the late Duke of Somerset, the foremost of these, occupied his father's place in the Queen's favour.

The next year, 1456, the Queen's party was so far strengthened that on Henry's partial recovery she addressed letters under the privy seal to York, Salisbury, and Warwick, requesting their immediate presence on affairs of state, but really to get them into her power. Margaret was holding court at Coventry, in which neighbourhood people were most loyal. The chiefs of the opposition had so far obeyed the writ of summons as to have commenced their journey, when, warned by private emissaries of their danger, each with the greatest despatch removed to his safest place of retreat. Richard to the Welsh Marshes, Salisbury to his estate in Yorkshire, and Warwick to Calais, where, as governor, he had command of the only regular troops England possessed. "The Queen was extremely vexed at this disappointment, but her comfort was that she had separated the three lords, and so rendered them less formidable to her."

But Margaret had a more substantial cause of thankfulness in the threatened disaster from foreign invasion; the unhappy country was attacked both by France and Scotland. In the face of common danger party strife was for the moment averted, and by means of ecclesiastical influence a public reconciliation took place. The ostentatious pomp employed on the occasion was in itself an evidence of the hollowness of the peace. London being the appointed meeting place, the chief nobles of either party assembled there each with a train of several hundred followers.

A thanksgiving service was held at St. Paul's Cathedral, the King and Queen in robes of state, preceded by the bishops, walked in solemn procession; the Duke of York led the Queen by the hand and the great nobles of the land followed in ill assorted pairs. The Londoners held high holiday, with bonfires and other tokens of loyalty, but not long after they raised a riot against Margaret, who had never been popular with them, and she was obliged to withdraw from the capital; she made a royal progress through the midland counties, ostensibly for the benefit of Henry's health, and she ingratiated herself and her party with the rural populations by the affability of her manners, and by putting forward her son Edward, a child of great beauty and promise. She wisely chose as his emblem the swan,

the badge of his illustrious ancestor, Edward III., and put into his hands little silver swans for distribution among the people. At the same time Margaret was raising troops, and in September, 1459, an encounter took place at Bloor Heath. The Queen saw the Lancastrian forces defeated, for, since Henry was too ill to take command she, if not actually on the battlefield, remained near enough to direct operations. Disaster seemed only to urge this courageous woman to fresh exertion; upon the flight of the royalists we find her, after her return to Coventry, rallying her adherents with such success as to be able, in seven months, again to take the field against the rebels, to whom she offered terms. For a time fortune favoured the Queen's assumption of the entire management of the war, and with the troops she had by her own perseverance collected, she pressed the insurgents so vigorously as to force the Duke of York to fly with his second son, Edmund, to Ireland, whilst the eldest, the Earl of March, followed Warwick to Calais. The following year Warwick and the Earl of March met the royalists at Northampton, and, aided by the treachery of Lord Grey de Ruthyn, inflicted on them a quite unexpected defeat. Henry was again made prisoner, and his Queen, with their infant son, fled first to Durham; but, finding the citizens hostile, she turned towards Wales. On the road the royal fugitives were actually captured, but, while the plunderers were engrossed in examining her jewels and other spoils, Margaret and Prince Edward escaped to Chester, and after many adventures found refuge in Harlech Castle, under the protection of a partisan of the Tudor princes. From here the Queen took ship to Scotland, and landing at Dumfries, was well and handsomely received; Queen Mary of Guelders, who was herself lamenting the accidental death of King James II., and protecting his youthful heir, showed great sympathy for her distressed sister, and responded so liberally to her requests for the loan of money and men, that before her enemies were fully aware of her hiding-place, the Queen of England was marching southward with a large army.

Meantime Richard, Duke of York, had carried the captive King to London, convened a Parliament, at the opening of which "he sat himself down in the King's chair, under the cloth of state, where he told them a long rabble of reasons why he had sat down in that place, that by law it was due unto him; and being desired to go visit the King, he said, God excepted, he knew no superior." The peers of the realm, however, were not yet quite of his opinion; to Henry himself they referred the question of right, and the captive monarch's fearless rejoinder appealed to the honour of his liege subjects. "My father was a king; his father was also a king: I have worn the crown forty years, from my cradle; you have all sworn fealty to me as your sovereign, and your fathers have done the like to my father and grandfather. How then can my right be disputed?" York could not get himself acknowledged king during Henry's lifetime, but the unfortunate sovereign was

compelled to concede his own son's right to the throne in favour of the Duke of York and his descendants. Towards the close of the year 1460, Margaret's army, swelled by recruits from the northern counties to eighteen or twenty thousand men, entered York, and at a council of war held there decided to march on London and release King Henry. Richard of York advanced from the capital with all haste, but, having only five thousand men under his banner, he threw himself into the impregnable Castle of Sandown, intending to remain there till joined by an army of borderers under his eldest son.

The Queen's forces, encamped at Wakefield, were eager for immediate battle. Margaret came beneath the castle walls and assailed the Duke in terms of bitter contumely on his want of courage in suffering himself "to be tamely braved by a woman." The valiant soldier was not proof against that woman's weapon which is sharper than the sword; he lost all self-control, discarding the counsel of his best advisers, dreading, as he put it, "that all men might report to his dishonour, that a woman hath made him a dastard whom no man could ever yet prove a coward." He marched out of his stronghold in battle array, but the false move cost him his life. He soon found himself overwhelmed by the vast disproportion of the enemy, whose advantage was augmented by an ambush previously prepared by the Queen. The centre of the Lancastrian army was commanded by Somerset. We have no evidence that the Queen appeared in person on the battlefield. York was taken like a "fish in a net or a deer in a buck-stall;" he died fighting bravely. His head was severed from his body, and, crowned with paper, was presented on the end of a lance to the victorious Queen with the words, "Madam, your war is done. Here is your King's ransom." Margaret is said to have been at first shocked at the bloody sight. She grew pale, and turned away her face; but feelings of horror were soon replaced by exultant joy. As, on taking a second look, she remembered how this enemy had sought to dishonour her name and annihilate her race, she laughed loud and hysterically, and ordered the head of "this king without a kingdom" to be stuck over the gates of York, and next morning the head of the Earl of Salisbury was placed beside it. This further cruelty was equally needless as excessive, since the unhappy Earl was already so badly wounded that he could not have lived many days; but with blind fury Margaret "disgraced her triumph and that of the house of Lancaster by such acts as these; and spent her time in the execution of her prisoners instead of improving the victory by rapid advances toward the capital."

But though Richard of York was dead and his younger son with him, the elder, the Earl of March, now Duke of York, was a no less formidable antagonist. He soon encountered one-half of Margaret's army, under the Earl of Pembroke, at Mortimer's

Cross; and, having gained the day, followed the Queen's sanguinary example in a ruthless execution of prisoners.

Margaret meantime gained a trifling victory over Warwick in the second battle of St. Albans, which secured the release of Henry. The King and Queen met with the most lively demonstrations of affectionate joy. At Margaret's request Henry conferred the dignity of knighthood on "their son, Prince Edward (aged seven), and thirty more of them who had valiantly behaved themselves in the battle." But the happiness of this meeting was marred by Margaret's cruel execution of two Yorkist lords, to whom Henry had given his word "that they should be spared, if they remained in the tent with him to assist in protecting him during the rout at St. Albans."

Elated by her recent success, Margaret imperiously demanded of the City of London provisions for her army and entrance into the capital; but the citizens, with whom she had never been popular, were offended at the depredations already committed by her northern cavalry, and refused to admit her, but gladly welcomed the Duke of York and his followers, and as he passed through the streets, the Earl of Warwick put the question to the public which they would acknowledge as their King, Henry or young Edward? With every demonstration of universal consent, the representative of the house of York was proclaimed by the title of Edward IV.

Yet, before he could spare time to be crowned, the newly-made King was called upon to maintain his assumed prerogative against the indefatigable Queen, who, in spite of her repulse in London, now gathered round her in Yorkshire no less than sixty thousand men. But the star of the Yorkists was in the ascendant. A storm of sleet driving full in the faces of the Lancastrians, aided their enemies to inflict on them a severe defeat at Towton. The King, Queen, and Prince fled to Scotland; but Margaret's proceedings there did but increase her unpopularity in England. The Queen-regent of that country arranged with her a treaty of betrothal between the Prince of Wales and the little sister of the boy-king, James III.; but the price of this token of friendship was the cession to Scotland of the important town of Berwick, an act for which the English never forgave our heroine.

A few months later Margaret and her cause fell into disfavour at the Scotch court; but when in dire need of money, help came from an unexpected quarter. The distressed Queen, aged but little over thirty, in spite of her troubles and anxieties, was a beautiful woman still; and the courage and fortitude with which she faced her difficulties did not fail to excite sympathy in the chivalrous. A French merchant in Scotland, to whom she had rendered some kindness at her father's court in days gone by, not only supplied

her with money, but with a vessel to carry her to France. Here she sought help of her cousin, Louis XI., and entreated all true knights to come to her assistance. The Duke of Bretagne promised his help, and so did the gallant and romantic Pierre de Brezé, seneschal of Normandy, a former friend. Her own family, as of old, were too expensively engaged in maintaining their own rights to aid her in any way, and the French King was watching with too much satisfaction the devastation of his powerful enemy, England, by her rival Plantagenet princes, to grant his relation any substantial help. He did, however, allow her a sum of money, Margaret promising to repay it in twelve months or surrender Calais. Louis also sent her two thousand troops, and with these and others collected under her friend De Brezé, she set sail for the north. A storm drove some of the ships ashore near Bamborough, and the Queen herself, with Prince Edward and De Brezé narrowly escaped to Berwick in a fishing-boat. It was the depth of an unusually severe winter, but Margaret, with indomitable courage, assembled all available forces to meet the Yorkists, only to be defeated by Edward IV. at Hedgeley Moor, and again at Hexham, where Henry fell into the victor's hands, Margaret with Prince Edward escaping into Scotland.

While wandering hungry in the forest of Hexham—then so wild a part of the country that few dared to cross it except with a strong escort—the defenceless royalties were soon attacked by a band of robbers. “They dragged her with brutal violence and furious menaces before their leader, held a drawn sword in readiness to cut her throat, and threatened her with all sorts of tortures and indignities, whereupon she threw herself on her knees with clasped hands, imploring them to have pity on her, for she was the daughter and wife of a king, and in times past was recognised by themselves as their Queen.” Ceasing for the moment to molest her, the robbers began to dispute over the rich spoils they had seized. Under cover of the darkness, for the moon shone only at intervals, Margaret and Edward escaped, in what direction they knew not, and were still groping their way in the depths of the forest when they were overtaken by a tall, strongly armed man, whom they imagined to be one of the band of robbers they had left. Taking the young Prince by the hand, Margaret presented him with these words: “Oh, man! win God's grace to-day by succouring an afflicted mother.” And as he appeared touched, she continued, “I charge thee to preserve from violence this royal innocent blood, which I do consign to thy care. Give him a refuge in thine obscure hiding-place, and he will one day give thee free access to his royal chamber, and make thee one of his barons, if by thy means he is happily preserved to enjoy the splendour of the crown.” The gallant bandit, who was an outlaw, not only gave them such shelter as he could,

but conducted them in safety towards the sea-shore, whence they took ship to Sluys, from there proceeding to Bruges, where they were received most honourably.

For the next seven years Margaret resided abroad, employing herself in the education of her clever, loving son, who, under the instruction of Sir John Fortescue, was becoming an interesting and attractive youth. All the time faithful adherents in England continued to correspond with the exiled Queen, keeping her informed of the progress of affairs, of the dissensions at court caused by the marriage of Edward IV. with Elizabeth Woodville, and the jealousy between her relatives, to whom great favour was shown, and the Earl of Warwick. Curiously enough, it was through a reconciliation with him, her personal as well as political enemy, that she experienced the greatest sorrows of her life.

Warwick, disgusted at home, came to Louis of France, and Margaret, then resident at Angers, was at length persuaded to grant him a friendly interview. This designing Earl, who had already given one daughter in marriage to the Duke of Clarence, a brother of Edward IV., now sought to unite himself with the Red Rose by bestowing the hand of Anne Neville, his other child, on Edward of Lancaster. Margaret hesitated several days before giving her consent to the alliance, but as the Prince of Wales, now nineteen, was pleased with the young and gentle lady, and no other hope of restoration presented itself, she finally agreed, and the wedding took place August, 1470.

Immediately afterwards Warwick set sail for England, there to re-kindle the flame of war. With such aid as he had secured from France he landed in Devonshire, and for a time all went well; numbers joined him daily, and Edward IV. fled in fear to Holland, but in a few months he returned with an army obtained from his brother-in-law, the powerful Duke of Burgundy, and Warwick was defeated and slain at Barnet.

Margaret, with Prince Edward and his young wife, on the news of Warwick's early success set sail for England; but, as on every previous occasion, stormy weather attended her passage. Landing at Weymouth, she learned the fatal news from the Countess of Warwick, and the sudden transition from joy to hopelessness was too much even for her iron spirit. "She fell down as if pierced by an arrow," and when she awakened from a long swoon of despair the royal party sought sanctuary for a few days at the Abbey of Beaulieu. At last Margaret's fortitude had given way; she was seized with fears for the safety of her son—a melancholy foreboding of the evil about to happen to him. She would have retired to France to await a more favourable opportunity, but the gallant young Prince was eager to fight, and the Lancastrian lords could not afford delay, so she was obliged again to try the chance of war.

Since Gloucester refused to open its gates, the small army of the Red Rose was placed

at a disadvantage on the plains of Tewkesbury, when Edward's larger force came up with it. The Prince of Wales fought gallantly, but he and his mother were both taken prisoners, and the remnant of their faithful followers scattered.

Shakespeare has vividly portrayed the circumstances of Prince Edward's death. Brought before the victors, the young man shows himself a true son of his brave mother.

King. Edward, what satisfaction canst thou make
For bearing arms, for stirring up my subjects,
And all the trouble thou hast turned me to ?

Prince. Speak like a subject, proud, ambitious York !
Suppose that I am now my father's mouth ;
Resign thy chair, and where I stand kneel thou,
Whilst I propose the self-same words to thee,
Which, traitor, thou wouldst have me answer to.

Q. Mar. Ah ! that thy father had been so resolved !

The fearless prince was stabbed by the King, and the Dukes of Gloucester and Clarence, beneath his mother's very eyes. Then as the murderers refused to end her miserable life in the same way—

Q. Mar. O Ned ! sweet Ned ! speak to thy mother, boy !
Canst thou not speak ?—O traitors ! murderers !

* * * * *

What's worse than murderer, that I may name it ?
No, no ; my heart will burst, an if I speak :—
And I will speak, that so my heart may burst.—
Butchers and villains, bloody cannibals !
How sweet a plant have you untimely cropped !
You have no children, butchers ! if you had,
The thought of them would have stirred up remorse.
But, if you ever chance to have a child,
Look in his youth to have him so cut off,
As, deathsmen ! you have rid this sweet young prince !

Death was denied to Margaret, but she experienced a refinement of torture in her public entry into London, a prisoner in the triumphal procession of King Edward, and the knowledge that her unfortunate husband, who had been a prisoner five years, was murdered in the Tower the same night that she herself was consigned there. At first Margaret's captivity was very rigorous, but by degrees it was considerably relaxed, and she was removed to Wallingford Castle, and placed under the care of the Duchess of Norfolk. Her family were untiring in their efforts to procure her release, and ultimately King René, her father, entered into an agreement with Louis of France that at his death Provence should revert and be for ever united to the crown of France, if Louis would pay

the ransom, 50,000 crowns, demanded by Edward IV. When the first instalment of this was paid, at the conclusion of 1475, Margaret was suffered to depart from England, the scene of all her joys and sorrows, and, retiring from the world, she took up her residence in one of her father's castles near Angers.

Although only fifty years old when she died, her terrible afflictions had so changed the countenance of this once beautiful woman, that she was hideous to behold. She surrendered all claim she might have on her father's dominions to the French king for a pension of six thousand livres, which, however, was badly paid. She expired in 1422, at Château Damprière, near Saumur, and was buried in Angers Cathedral.

A modern historian thus speaks of her: "She was an admirable princess, but more illustrious for her undaunted spirit in adversity than for her moderation in prosperity. She seems neither to have enjoyed the virtues nor been subject to the weaknesses of her sex, and was as much tainted with ferocity as endowed with the courage of that barbarous age in which she lived. Yet, remembering that the age was barbarous, how much truth may be distorted in the bitterness of party spirit, and the difficulties which surrounded Margaret's life from the cradle to the grave, we cannot justly withhold from her the title of a great queen."

XVIII.

ELIZABETH WOODVILLE.

THE dazzling loveliness of Elizabeth Woodville enchanted our beauty-loving Edward IV. the moment he set eyes on her. According to tradition, this lady first met the King in Whittlebury Forest, Northamptonshire; it was about the year 1463. She, a poor and destitute widow, was residing in her father's house at Grafton Castle, in the same county, when, hearing that the King was to hunt that way, with her two little sons by her side she stationed herself under an oak-tree (the venerable lord of the forest is still standing and known as the "Queen's Oak"), to petition him for the restoration of Bradgate, the inheritance of her innocent children, which had been taken from them because their father, Sir John Grey, had died fighting for the house of Lancaster. Elizabeth did wisely in making her request in person. She was not more than twenty-nine years old, a delicate blonde beauty, with abundant long wavy hair, fair and soft; and, in mournful mood, with downcast eyes, her sweet interesting face would have moved to pity a more stony-hearted man than King Edward. He not only granted her petition for her fatherless children, but yielded his heart a captive to the lovely suppliant.

Elizabeth might have been merely an addition to the list of pretty women, the victims of this licentious soldier-monarch; but the meek beauty possessed a mind filled with self-esteem and common sense. Her well-known answer to the King's courting speaks for itself: "I know I am not good enough, my liege, to be your queen; but I am far too good to become your mistress." This unforeseen opposition, as might be expected, still increased Edward's passion, and, after a struggle of no very long duration, he resolved at all hazards to make her his wife. So, in May, 1464, the King of England married the widow of a simple knight in the little town of Grafton, the bride's mother being almost the only witness; and afterwards Edward went to spend some days at Grafton Castle, as if on a friendly visit to Lord Rivers, Elizabeth's father, who was not supposed to know of the union till it was made public at Reading the following Michaelmas, when



ELIZABETH WOODVILLE.

Queen of Edward 4th

LONDON VIRTUE & CO

Edward formally presented her to the peers as his lawful wife, and she made her offering in the abbey church.

Edward had delayed the publication of his marriage for several reasons. By this union he had broken faith with Elizabeth Lucy, to whom he had previously been engaged. He was anxious to find out how the people would approve the match. His mother, the Duchess of York, "Proud Cis," as she was styled by the vulgar, had, since her son's elevation to the throne, taken upon herself all the state of a queen, and she was most unwilling to be displaced by a low-born lady and a widow.

Edward was also anxious to prove that his wife, if poor, was of princely blood. Her father, Richard Woodville, considered the handsomest man of his time, was a squire of Henry V., who had gained the affections of her mother, the widow of the Duke of Bedford, in much the same way as the valiant Owen Tudor had won the heart and hand of Queen Katherine, and both clandestine marriages had taken place about the same time. The allowance made by Parliament to the widow of the King's brother was forfeited on her second marriage; but the Duchess succeeded after a time in getting this restored, and, though always poor, she occupied the position of first lady of the land for some years before Henry VI. married; and, through the assistance of Cardinal Beaufort, her husband was first raised to the rank of Baron, and afterwards became Earl of Rivers.

Being of the Beaufort faction, the Duchess was in favour with Margaret of Anjou, and Elizabeth, her eldest daughter, born at Grafton Castle in 1433, the moment she attained a suitable age was named maid of honour to the Queen. Little did the young girl guess, as she waited on her royal mistress, that she should one day occupy the throne herself.

When about seventeen years of age, Elizabeth was demanded in marriage by a valued adherent of the Duke of York, the brave Sir Hugh Johns. The suitor was highly recommended by special letters from the Earl of Warwick and from Richard of York; but the fair damsel showed that she had a will of her own by rejecting him. Whether it was his person did not take her fancy, or that he was too poor to please her, is uncertain; but it was more probably the latter consideration had the greater weight: for, as may be frequently remarked among persons who in early life are placed in situations where the lack of money is keenly felt, her after career shows her to have placed a very high value on this world's goods.

Not long after Elizabeth accepted the proposals of a gentleman of the opposite party, John Grey, son and heir of the wealthy and powerful Lord Ferrers of Groby, a very good match for the young maid of honour if the house of Lancaster had remained in the ascendant. After marriage, Elizabeth was made one of the four ladies of the bedchamber

to Queen Margaret, but she resided chiefly at Bradgate, her husband's property, and the birthplace of her sons Thomas and Richard.

Tradition says that Elizabeth Grey followed her royal mistress in the campaign of 1460, and that she was sent as a spy to Warwick's camp just before the second battle of St. Albans. In this battle her husband, as leader of the cavalry, did good service for the Red Rose, and was one of those rewarded with knighthood by Henry VI. in the brief hour of triumph; but the valiant soldier died a week later of wounds received in the fight, leaving Elizabeth a desolate widow with two helpless children. In consequence of the confiscation of her husband's property, she was forced to seek a home for herself and her little ones in her mother's house at Grafton. It was through her mother that Edward IV. claimed for his consort descent from royalty. The Duchess of Bedford had been a princess of the house of Luxemburg, and the King now sent an embassy to the Comte de Charolois to use his influence to induce the Comte Jacques de St. Pol, the Queen's great-uncle, to come to England with a company of a hundred knights, to be present at her coronation, it being well understood that Edward would willingly defray all expenses connected with the journey. Accordingly the invitation was accepted, though the Luxemburg family had, after her *mésalliance* with Richard Woodville, disavowed all connection with the Duchess.

It was not only to his proud and beautiful mother that Edward's marriage gave offence. The Earl of Warwick was disappointed, because he had hoped to unite the King he had assisted in mounting the throne to his own daughter, Isabella Neville, and, with others of the nobility of England, he was disgusted with the favour shown at Court to the new Queen's many brothers and sisters. Elizabeth, who by her meekness and womanly wiles had gained a firm ascendancy over the King, and could obtain from him anything she desired, lost no time in advancing the fortunes of her family. At the tournaments and festivities held at Reading, when she was declared Queen, her brother Anthony Woodville, a gallant and gifted young man, took a prominent part, and before his sister's coronation he had married the orphan of Lord Scales, the richest heiress in the kingdom. William, the Queen's eldest brother, was accorded the hand of the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk, who was eighty years of age, but very wealthy. Her sisters, all beautiful but portionless, were speedily married to men of the first rank and influence in the kingdom.

Elizabeth was crowned at Westminster in the month of May, 1465, with all possible splendour; both the King and Queen sought, by various acts of favour and condescension, to conciliate those who had taken umbrage, and won many over to look with more satisfaction on a match that had previously excited no small measure of discontent. Also when

next year a princess was born, they mollified the Duchess of York by selecting her as principal godmother. The Earl of Warwick, too, was induced to stand godfather; but no friendly measures could make up to the power-loving Earl for his loss of influence, and the breach between him and the King was widened by various irritating circumstances, among others that the Queen artfully succeeded in marrying the heiress of the Duke of Exeter to her eldest son by her first husband, when he had set his heart on securing her for his nephew, George Neville. Also at this time the King offered an insult to the Earl's daughter Isabella, "the handsomest young lady in England," whom her father had hoped to see sharing the throne. The despised lady was soon afterwards married to the Duke of Clarence, and Warwick persuaded the young noble to withdraw from Court, and side in a rebellion against the King his brother. In 1469 an outlawed Lancastrian lord, known as Robin of Bedesdale, headed a large body of insurgents, which fought and conquered the royal troops at Edgecote, in Yorkshire. In the pursuit the rebels came upon Lord Rivers, the Queen's father, and his eldest son, who had sought refuge in the Forest of Dean, dragged them to Northampton, and there, in the names of Clarence and Warwick, beheaded them without even the form of trial. Public hatred had been roused against Lord Rivers because, in his capacity of Lord Treasurer, he had tampered with the coin; but there was much ill-will felt against the Queen's family generally, and an accusation of witchcraft was brought against her mother, who narrowly escaped the death of torture and degradation suffered by so many unfortunate wise women in those barbarous times.

While Elizabeth was mourning the death of her beloved relations, further troubles overtook her. King Edward, proceeding northward to quell the rebellion, was taken prisoner by Warwick and confined in Warwick Castle till he had agreed to betroth his eldest daughter, Princess Elizabeth, to George Neville. Then he was removed under a strong guard to a seat of the Earl's brother, the Archbishop of York, in Hertfordshire. From here Edward made his escape, and was soon among his faithful Londoners, with whom Elizabeth had remained in safety. Warwick and Clarence fled to the Continent, and their ships, with the exception of two, containing themselves and their families, were all taken and destroyed by Edward's fleet, under command of Anthony Woodville, the Queen's brother.

The King established his Queen in the Tower and took command of his troops, but the danger was not yet over. Receiving timely warning that his army intended to betray him to Warwick, he escaped in haste to Holland, while the rebel Earl, having allied himself with Margaret of Anjou, returned from abroad. Queen Elizabeth, expecting again to become a mother, was really quite secure in the Tower; but, although she had made every

preparation for a siege, no sooner did she hear that the rebels were approaching the capital than she abandoned the Tower and the custody of the deposed King Henry VI., and stealing secretly up the river, took refuge in the sanctuary at Westminster. Within its precincts were two cruciform churches, one above the other, and lodgings in the houses within the privileged ground were dear and crowded. Westminster Hospital now occupies part of the site. Registering herself, her three daughters, her mother, and her devoted attendant, Lady Scrope, as "sanctuary women," here for nearly six months did the Queen of England remain "in great penury, forsaken of all friends," and in this wretched spot the heir of England, afterward Edward V., first saw the light, November 1st, 1470, in the dwelling of refugee criminals and debtors. More describes Elizabeth as "sitting alow on the rushes," attended by a chance midwife who happened to be in the sanctuary. If it had not been for the charity of a butcher who supplied them with meat, they must have been starved into surrendering themselves to their enemies. The Abbot of Westminster baptised the infant prince with as little ceremony as if he had been the son of a peasant. The Duchess of Bedford and Lady Scrope were his sponsors.

In March, King Edward landed in England, and marching almost unopposed to London, made his way to the sanctuary "and embraced the Queen, that had long abided there in deep trouble, sorrow, and heaviness, which she sustained with all manner of patience belonging to any creature, as constantly as ever was seen by any person of such high estate to endure; in the which season, natheless, she had brought into this world a fair son, to the King's singular comfort and greatest joy, and to all them that him truly loved." Fleetwood's chronicle goes on to tell us that Edward rewarded all those who had befriended his beloved Queen in her trouble with the utmost generosity, and that he removed her forthwith to Baynard's Castle, a Norman fortress "built with walls and rampires" on the banks of the Thames below St. Paul's, a Yorkist stronghold, where Elizabeth remained in safety and comfort till the battle of Barnet had re-established her husband's authority in the land. During the battle of Tewkesbury the Queen was in the Tower. Immediately after it Falconbridge, a follower of Warwick, made a serious attack on the place, putting Elizabeth and her children "in the greatest jeopardy that ever was." But on this occasion the Queen had her valiant brother, Anthony Woodville, to protect her, and he repelled the impending danger.

Their enemies defeated or slain, and peace restored to the land, Edward and his Queen proceeded to enjoy themselves, holding a series of feasts, banquets, and amusements of all kinds, and the generous-minded monarch, wishing all who had befriended him in adversity to share his prosperity, invited over Louis of Bruges, Governor of Holland, to visit his

court at Windsor, there introduced him to his consort and children, entertained him with princely hospitality, and afterwards, at Westminster, presented him to Parliament and created him Earl of Winchester.

The year 1477 was marked for the Queen by the marriage of her second son, Richard, Duke of York, a boy of five, with Anne Mowbray, heiress of the Duke of Norfolk, a child barely three; and very soon afterwards the King's brother, the Duke of Clarence, met with a horrible and not altogether unmerited fate. Jealousy of the Queen's relations had induced him to join in rebellion against the King, but previous to the battle of Barnet he had returned to his allegiance, and Edward had granted him free pardon and treated him with brotherly generosity. He it was who, standing by the King's side after the battle of Tewkesbury, gave the first spear-thrust in the murder of young Edward of Lancaster; now this weak and wicked prince again began to show signs of discontent and disaffection. He rewarded his brother's kindness by accusing the Queen of sorcery, declaring in the council-chamber that she bewitched the King, and with the most violent expressions he abused them both. The charge of sorcery was grounded on the absurd vanity of the Queen's mother's family, the Princes of Luxemburg, claiming descent from the "Fair Melusina," a water-nymph well known in popular German literature. Clarence was arrested without delay, and lodged in the Tower. He was tried and sentenced to death for high treason, but while Edward was hesitating about signing the death warrant, a butt of malmsey wine was introduced into the Duke's prison. The death of his wife Isabella, Warwick's elder daughter, to whom he was devotedly attached, had been a great source of grief to Clarence, and since his loss he had taken to a constant habit of intemperance. Thus, whoever devised the plan of placing an unlimited quantity of his favourite beverage within his reach secured his death without the aid of any executioner. He was found dead, with his head hanging over into the butt, as he had doubtless fallen when overcome by intoxication. The Duke of Gloucester accused the Queen of thus getting rid of Clarence, but it was more generally believed that the cruel Duke himself had more to do with it.

The later years of her husband's reign could not have been very happy for Elizabeth. In spite of her great beauty, she was a woman who made more enemies than friends, and Edward now openly neglected her for a mistress, named Jane Shore, the wife of a London goldsmith. The King, in his prosperity, lived a life of luxury and self-indulgence, which soon undermined his health; an intermittent fever, by which he was attacked, baffled the skill of the physicians, and in April, 1483, he died in his palace at Westminster, when only in his forty-third year.

Elizabeth was now left almost single-handed, and without any legal authority, to watch

over the interests of her youthful sons ; for even Edward's most devoted follower, Hastings, feared the influence of the queen-mother's relations. The young King Edward V. was, at the time of his father's death, resident in Ludlow Castle, under the tutorship of Lord Rivers, the Queen's brother, and the faithful chamberlain, Vaughan. Coldness of heart has always been imputed to Elizabeth by her enemies, but she was certainly fondly devoted to her children and family. If the measures had been taken which her maternal instincts prompted, the young princes, her sons, might have escaped their dismal fate. First, she desired that a very strong guard should be employed in conducting the King to London ; but the council, at which, till the appointment of a Protector, she took a place, dreading the aggrandisement of the Woodvilles, overruled her suggestion. Consequently, King Edward was captured on the road by his uncle, the Duke of Gloucester. The wily Richard had sent a letter to Elizabeth, written in the most kind and sympathising tone, but the Queen was doubtless but too well acquainted with the character of her late husband's hunchbacked brother. On receiving the news of the King's capture, his mother hastened, with her second son, Richard, Duke of York, and her numerous daughters, to the sanctuary of Westminster. This time she was lodged in the Abbot's palace. Here the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was also Lord Chancellor, speedily visited her, declaring that if any other than the rightful heir were put forward as king, he would, on the morrow, crown young Richard. He also delivered to her the great seal ; but the Duke of Gloucester no sooner arrived in London than the Archbishop took fright at his own act, visited the sanctuary a second time, and induced Elizabeth to restore the seal. Richard of Gloucester continued to make a show of preparation for the young King's coronation, but the Queen-mother dared not leave her retreat. To get both Princes into his power was the Protector's object. At length the Archbishop of York, by solemnly assuring Elizabeth of the safety of his person, prevailed on her to yield up her second son, which she did with great misgivings. Her last words to the Prince were a true foreboding of the evil to come : "Farewell, mine own sweet son. God send you good keeping ! Let me kiss you once ere you go, for God knoweth when we shall kiss together again !" Richard was speedily removed to the Tower, never to leave it alive.

The Protector held his councils in Baynard Castle, the residence of his mother, the old Duchess of York, who had always disliked her daughter-in-law. Here Gloucester accused Elizabeth of sorcery, and of having, in league with Jane Shore, withered his arm, which everyone knew had been so from his birth. Hastings, he declared, was in league with these "witches ;" and when the honest Earl rose to deny the charge, the Protector had him dragged out into the yard of the Tower and beheaded on the spot.

The next sad and disquieting news that reached Elizabeth, was of the execution of Anthony Woodville, her brother, and her son, Richard Grey, at Pontefract, where they had been imprisoned.

While thus clearing his road to the throne of all the late King's devoted followers, Richard did not himself lay claim to the crown. His partisans got up a petition and presented it in Parliament, declaring the marriage of Edward IV. and Elizabeth illegal, and the children consequently illegitimate, and offering the throne to Richard. Events had marched quickly: Edward IV. had died in April of 1483; it was in June that Richard III. was proclaimed King, and before the end of August of the same year Edward V. and his brother had been murdered and buried away in the Tower, their uncle having given orders for them to be smothered while he was making a royal progress in the northern part of the country.

Elizabeth has been represented as heartlessly anxious to ally herself or her daughter with the murderer of her children, awaiting with impatience the death of Richard's first wife; but the action seems hardly compatible with the fact that, in an illness brought on by shock to her system, caused by her recent troubles, a priest-physician in the employ of Margaret Beaufort attended her, and also negotiated the marriage between her son Henry Tudor, the last of the Plantagenets, and Elizabeth of York, which took place immediately after Henry, by the defeat and death of Richard III., at Bosworth Field, became King Henry VII.

But in the interval, before the fulfilment of this contract, Elizabeth was obliged to surrender herself to the mercy of Richard. During the unsuccessful rebellion of Buckingham, in which her son, Sir Anthony Woodville, joined, she remained in the sanctuary; but she had trespassed long on the hospitality of the Abbot, and had no money of her own. Richard placed her under the custody of one Nesfield, a squire of the body of Richard, to whom an annual sum was allotted for her maintenance as a private gentlewoman. Thus she was supplied with the necessities of life, but had no money or servants of her own—a position most derogatory to one who had been queen of the land!

When Henry VII. ascended the throne he assigned to his mother-in-law the dower castles of Farnham, Maplebury, Waltham, and Baddow, with an income befitting her rank, but she only lived seven years to enjoy the comfort of her altered circumstances. For some reason, which history does not furnish, the King, her son-in-law, had no personal liking for Elizabeth, and though she was chosen godmother to his heir, Arthur, Prince of Wales, she seldom appeared at her daughter's court, and was said to have abetted the schemes of the Earl of Lincoln and Lambert Simnel—a most unlikely tale, for she would

thereby be injuring her own children to advance those claiming descent from her bitterest enemies.

Henry VII., to cement his friendship with Scotland, was desirous for the Queen-Dowager to marry James III., a young man not half her age. The Scotch monarch died before the scheme was settled.

Two years before her death Elizabeth retired into the convent of Bermondsey. There she occupied the apartments bequeathed by the founder, an ancestor of Edward IV., for the use of his family in time of sickness or infirmity. In April, 1492, she died, requesting in a will made in her last illness that she might be buried by the side of King Edward at Windsor, with little ostentation or expense. Money she had none to leave. Her numerous daughters attended her deathbed.

We cannot pretend to criticise fairly the conduct of Elizabeth Woodville as Queen of England. Raised from among the gentry of the country, she encountered at every step the jealousy a haughty nobility could not have offered to a born princess from a foreign court. If too partial to her own family, to whom else could she look for sympathy and support? The King's infidelity, the violent death of her first husband, her father, three of her sons and two of her brothers, added to the loss of friends and fortune, excite our pity for one who in happier and more settled times might have done more for the benefit of her country than be a good mother to her children.

Elizabeth completed Queen's College at Cambridge, the erection of which was begun by Margaret of Anjou.



ANNE OF WARWICK.

Queen of Richard 3rd

XIX.

ANNE OF WARWICK.

ANNE NEVILLE, the gentle, unfortunate consort of Richard "the hunchback," was born in the year 1454, at Warwick Castle, and descended by both parents from some of the most wealthy and powerful of the English nobility. The number of persons of noble blood slain in the Wars of the Roses was immense, and the property left consequently fell into the hands of the surviving few. Anne's father, Richard Neville, the "king-maker"—one of the last remaining Beauforts, descendants of Edward III.'s son, John of Gaunt, and Katherine Swinford, a family of which every member was noted for remarkable ability—took a prominent part in the affairs of the country in the fifteenth century, a period of misrule and disorder, when energy and decision of character were specially essential to success in life.

Her mother, Anne, was daughter to the great Earl of Warwick, so renowned in the wars of France in the reign of Henry VI. His only son and daughter were both allied in marriage to the Nevilles. The son, Henry Beauchamp, chief favourite of the unfortunate King Henry, was created by him Premier of England, Duke of Warwick, and King of the Isle of Wight; but as he died young, and his infant daughter did not long survive him, the whole of his property reverted to Anne of Warwick, mother of our heroine. Her husband, Richard Neville, assumed the title of Earl of Warwick in his wife's right. Besides Anne, their only other child was an elder daughter, Isabella, described by a contemporary chronicler as "the handsomest young lady in England," but of Anne he says "she was the better woman of the two."

When quite young the Lady Anne was taken to Calais, of which her father, a powerful ally of the house of York, was governor. Here she resided for some years with her mother and elder sister, occasionally removing to Warwick's strong family residence in London, when the ascendancy of the Yorkists rendered the capital for the time being a safe abode for the ladies. Here, if little Anne chanced to peep out on the courts or narrow

streets, she might distinguish her father's numerous followers by their red jackets, each embroidered back and front with the family badge, a bear and ragged staff.

Owing to the close alliance between Warwick and York, the families of the nobles were frequently together. Thus Richard of York, created at his brother's coronation Duke of Gloucester, early took a fancy to possess the person and fortune of his cousin Anne, who was his junior by two years ; but the young lady regarded him with great aversion and dread, which is not surprising, as he was neither amiable of disposition nor handsome in person. Rous, a contemporary historian and family priest to the house of Warwick, has described him as the very reverse of this, and drew of him what is evidently intended as a faithful portrait, in which the head is sunk deep between the heavy shoulders. He writes, "At his nativity the scorpion was in the ascendant. He came into the world with teeth and a head with hair reaching to his shoulders. He was small of stature, with a small face and unequal shoulders, the right being higher than the left."

At Calais, Anne Neville was a witness to the marriage of her sister with George of Clarence, and a year later Warwick's daughters, with the Duke, shared their father's flight from the country, when King Edward made his escape from the prison into which Warwick had thrust him. At Dartmouth the fugitives embarked for Calais ; their vessel but narrowly escaped capture by King Edward's fleet, which took or sunk the rest of Warwick's ships. In the midst of these dangers, and the terror and discomfort of a rough passage, the Lady Anne was called on to help and cheer her sister, the Duchess Isabella, whose only son was born on board ship ; and even when they at length reached Calais and hoped to land in safety, they were greeted by cannon balls. However, the deputy-governor, a Gascon named Vauclere, found means to let them know that he was their friend, but had prevented their landing because the townspeople intended to do them harm. All the aid he could give was a little wine for the young mother, and directions to land at Dieppe.

As soon as the ladies were sufficiently recovered, the Earl of Warwick led them to Amboise, where the King of France received them with every mark of goodwill. Three months later, August, 1470, Louis XI. and his assembled court witnessed at Angers the marriage of Anne of Warwick with Prince Edward, the heir of the imprisoned King of England, Henry VI.

We have already noticed in our memoir of Margaret of Anjou how reluctant that Queen was to see her beloved son united with the daughter of her enemy ; but Anne was a gentle girl of sixteen, and the Prince most anxious for the marriage. Nor was Anne displeased to find such a handsome and affectionate young husband as a protection against the unwelcome addresses of her cousin Richard.

Hurried from the altar to the battlefield, short time had the young Prince and Princess of Wales to enjoy one another's society. Landing at Weymouth, the first news of disaster, the loss of the battle of Barnet, awaited them. Mourning the death of her father, Anne accompanied that small but desperate band of Lancastrians who encountered the Yorkist troops at Tewkesbury. Princess Anne, being in company either with her husband or her mother-in-law when both were taken prisoners, was probably carried with them before Edward IV. and his brothers, and saw with her own eyes the Duke of Gloucester, her dreaded lover, thrust his spear through the body of her unfortunate husband. History at this period is too busy with greater tragedies to record the sorrows of a friendless young girl, however exalted her station, but one may fairly assume that our surmise is correct, for we next hear of the Princess Anne sharing the imprisonment of her mother-in-law in the Tower, and, by tenderness and love, comforting as best she could the hapless Queen Margaret.

But fate had further trials in store for the young widow. Her father had left immense wealth at the disposal of his victors. The selfish avaricious Clarence claimed the whole of it in right of his wife, the elder daughter, but Richard of Gloucester announced his intention of marrying Anne, and dividing Warwick's inheritance with his brother.

No record is preserved of the time when Anne quitted the Tower, but no doubt when Margaret of Anjou was removed to Wallingford, there to await the payment of the ransom which was to set her free, the widowed Princess of Wales, whose detention was of no political importance, was at liberty to go where she would. Friendless and moneyless, whither should she turn to escape marriage with the loathsome Richard? The Duke of Clarence, from selfish motives, aided her to hide herself from his brother, and for more than a year she lived as a domestic servant in a family in London. What a position for the daughter of the richest and proudest lord of the land! It is a noble trait in the character of Anne, and one which appeals to every womanly heart, that she preferred to live in hardships and obscurity rather than be chained to a man she disliked. But Anne could not remain long in hiding. Richard sought for her diligently, and, so soon as he discovered her, carried her off to the sanctuary of St. Martin's-le-Grand, and here she was confined till he had compelled her to marry him. The marriage was in some way irregular, perhaps because the bride's consent was extorted by force, or perhaps the dispensation necessary in the case of relations had not been obtained from the Pope. However that may be, it was expected that Anne would sue for a divorce, and we find in the records of Parliament an entry that the Duke of Gloucester might continue to hold his wife's property, even if she succeeded in securing her personal freedom.

Gloucester was at this time governor of the northern marshes, so he carried his wife to Middleham Castle, his Yorkshire home. Here she continued to reside during the lifetime of her husband's brother; but Richard himself, fortunately for the gentle lady, was very little at home, the frequent inroads of the Scots, and the unsettled state of the country, requiring his presence first in one place and then in another.

In 1474, the birth of a son, who was named Edward, reconciled Anne to her fate. In him she found a recipient for all the love and tenderness that had hitherto been pent up within her own breast. In the care and education of her boy Anne would have been contented to live her quiet life at Middleham Castle, and we have no reason to believe that she regarded with anything but horror the series of foul murders by which her husband secured the throne. Contemporary historians declare that she did not participate in the plunder of those who dared to oppose the treacherous designs of the tyrant; but such a man as Richard would brook no disobedience from his wife, so when he ordered her to come to London and prepare to share his coronation, what could she do but yield to his wishes? Anne arrived from Yorkshire with a powerful following of four thousand rough-looking northerners, whom the citizens of the capital regarded with little favour. On July 4th, 1483, Richard conducted his wife and son by water from Westminster to the Tower with regal magnificence, and little Edward was at the same time declared Prince of Wales. Let us hope that Anne did not know that as she passed in at the water-gate close to the prison of the late Prince of Wales, now by right King Edward V., and his brother Richard, Duke of York, that these unfortunate princes had been turned out of the state apartments of the Tower to make way for her son and herself.

On the morrow the King and Queen went in procession through the city. The coronation was unusually brilliant; some of the preparations made were originally intended for young Edward V., and Richard sought to dazzle the people with his extraordinary hospitality and display of pageantry into forgetting how defective was his title. Richard and Anne, as a first part to the ceremony, walked barefoot from Westminster Hall to the shrine of St. Edward. Of course, a bright carpeting was laid down for them to tread upon, and they were preceded by the clergy, bearing crosses, and the great officers of the household carrying the regalia, the highest in rank being nearest to royalty. On either side of the Queen was a bishop, and she herself walked under a canopy, wearing a gold circlet with precious stones upon her head, and coronation robes of rich purple velvet furred with ermine and adorned with rings and tassels of gold. She had come from the Tower in a litter, wearing a kirtle, train, and mantle of white cloth of gold, so handsome that twenty-seven yards of material had been used in making the costume. The mantle was richly furred with ermine.

After the coronation, the residence of the Queen and Prince was at Windsor ; then they went on progress to Warwick Castle. After some delay Richard joined them, and the Court removed to York, where the coronation ceremony was repeated, and the little Prince, now nearly ten years old, was formally invested with the principality of Wales.

The rebellion of the Duke of Buckingham caused a hasty termination of the festivities at York. Queen Anne followed her husband southwards, sending her son to his old home at Middleham Castle. The rebellion came to nothing ; but a heavy trial awaited the King and Queen in the loss of their only child. At Nottingham tidings came, March, 1484, that he had "lost his life." The manner of his decease will ever remain a mystery. Contemporaries called it "an unhappy death," but give no further detail.

Whether the bereaved mother reproached herself for having trusted the boy out of her sight we know not ; but her grief at his loss was inconsolable. In him all her hopes and affections were centred, and after his death she had nothing to live for. Never robust, from this time she grew daily weaker and paler. Rous, the family chronicler we have before mentioned, has left a portrait of her with the thin, almost diamond-shaped, face of one in the later stage of decline, the countenance sadly altered, but still recognisable, and with the decidedly Plantagenet cast of feature noticeable in a picture made of her as the young and happy bride of Prince Edward. Anne lingered just one year after the death of her son. The King's enemies told her he was anxious for her death, that he might marry his niece, Elizabeth of York ; but apparently she gave no heed to the rumour, as she kindly entertained the princess and her four younger sisters with all honourable courtesies during the Christmas festivities kept in great state at Westminster.

In March, 1485, Anne's unhappy life closed at the early age of thirty-one. She was buried with suitable splendour near the altar, Westminster, and Richard was observed to shed tears as he followed her to the grave. There is no foundation for the tale that the King had murdered her, though a total eclipse of the sun happening on the day of her death strengthened the general belief in foul play. No monument was erected over the Queen's remains ; but this does not necessarily betoken any slight to her memory on the part of Richard. His throne was already tottering to its fall ; five months later the usurper King lay defeated and slain on Bosworth Field.

ELIZABETH OF YORK.

THE consort of King Henry VII. possessed a far better legal claim to wear the crown in her own right than did her illustrious husband. As the eldest of the daughters of Edward IV., after the murder of the little princes her brothers, Elizabeth was his heiress, and setting aside the imbecile Earl of Warwick, son of the Duke of Clarence, the whole house of York had become extinct in the male line. Henry of Richmond could claim kindred with the royal family of France through his grandmother Queen Katherine; but it was in right of his mother, Margaret Beaufort, that he asserted a claim to the English throne, and she was descended from one of those sons of John of Gaunt and Katherine Swinford who had been legitimised by the Pope, and by Richard II. rendered capable of holding any office *short of the royal dignity*. Nevertheless, it was generally felt that, in order to secure the peace and good government which had so long been denied the land, the sceptre must be placed in the hand of a sovereign capable of filling the office of military champion, and such a candidate appeared in the person of the active warlike Henry of Richmond, who declared himself willing to put an end to all chance of a renewal of the disastrous wars of the Roses by marrying Elizabeth of York.

This princess was born February, 1466, at Westminster Palace. Great was the disappointment that the first offspring of the love match between Edward IV. and Elizabeth Woodville was not a son, as the physicians and astrologers had prognosticated it should be. King Edward, with great faith and some skill in the art of divining, firmly believed that the child, whether male or female, was destined to sit on his throne. Accordingly, he lavished a special affection and attention on his pretty little daughter. The princess was even more beautiful than her mother, with the same small regular features and abundance of fair hair, added to a tall and very graceful figure inherited from her father, who was a handsome, well-made man, standing six feet three inches in his stockings.

Elizabeth was baptised in Westminster Abbey, with all the ceremony due to the heir-

apparent. It will be remembered that her grandmother, Cicely of York, held her at the font, and that the famous Earl of Warwick stood godfather.

When only four years old, Elizabeth was taken by her mother to the Sanctuary at Westminster, where the Queen was forced to seek shelter for herself and her children while their father's throne was in peril; but this time dark days for the Yorkists soon passed away. Edward quickly returned from Holland to embrace his wife and children, and remove them to a more comfortable lodging in Baynard's Castle, the residence of his mother, and before leaving London installed them in the Palace of the Tower. While Edward was opposing the Lancastrians in Gloucestershire, an assault was made on the Tower by Thomas Neville, a natural son of the late William Lord Fauconbridge. However, the attack was repelled by the Queen's valiant and able brother, Anthony Woodville, whom Edward had left in charge of his wife and family. The part of the Tower of London in which our kings and queens sometimes resided for safety or convenience is now demolished. It occupied the south-eastern corner of the fortress, between the river and the keep, or White Tower, which, with its four turrets, is still so familiar to Londoners. Here, beneath the windows of the Queen's lodging, was the Queen's garden, where doubtless the Princess Elizabeth sported and played with her little sisters, unaware of the presence of any danger.

Young as Elizabeth was at this time, she had already, although unconsciously, experienced some of the vicissitudes of fortune to which the great are frequently exposed, and her destiny had been changed more than once by King Edward, who, though such a loving father, concurred with the fashion of other sovereigns of his time in making use of his children as instruments for forming advantageous treaties with his enemies. Thus, while Elizabeth was heiress presumptive to the crown, he offered her in marriage to George Neville, in order to conciliate the Neville family, creating him Duke of Bedford; but this arrangement was made while Edward was a prisoner in Warwick Castle, so we cannot be sure he was a free agent. Next the King, on hearing that Anne of Warwick was to marry Prince Edward, offered his daughter to Margaret of Anjou for her son. Perhaps this was only to decoy the Lancastrian prince into his power, which was certainly his intention in the next proposals he made for Elizabeth's marriage. After the death of Prince Edward, the King sent to Brittany, offering to Henry of Richmond that if he and his exiled uncle, Jasper Tudor, would return to England and put themselves under his protection, Henry should marry Elizabeth, and his uncle should be reinstated in his earldom of Pembroke. The exiles received the overtures with joy, and were about to embark with the English envoys at St. Malo, when the Duke of Brittany, who had been base enough to accept the gold sent by Edward to bribe him to silence, secretly informed them that the promises were

only a lure by which Edward hoped to compass their death. Thus we may note that the Yorkists deemed Henry Tudor a dangerous person, even while they were in what seemed secure possession of the throne. Young Richmond—whose father, as we have before mentioned, died while his son was an infant—had been adopted by his uncle Jasper, whose residence, Pembroke Castle, was taken by a knight named Herbert when the Yorkists first came into power. Little Henry, left behind by the evacuating party, was kindly treated by the new owner, and educated with his large family. Among these kind friends Henry remained till he was grown up, and the short-lived success of the Lancastrians restored Jasper Tudor to his rights. When the Earl was again obliged to flee the country his nephew accompanied him, and they received a friendly welcome from the Duke of Brittany.

But in tracing the early history of her future husband we are digressing from the story of Princess Elizabeth. At the festivities held in honour of Edward's restoration to power and the visit of Louis of Bruges, in 1472, the little princess, who could not have been more than seven years old, danced with the King and afterwards with her uncle, the Duke of Buckingham. At this period dancing had become a necessary accomplishment for all royal and noble persons; after dinner the tables were cleared away, the ladies made a fresh toilet, and the ball began. It is impossible to determine what were the steps gone through by the little maid and her illustrious partners. At the French Court, where the art was practised with more grace and elegance than anywhere else in the world, dances were of two distinct kinds, those performed by professionals for the amusement of the wealthy, and those danced by royalty and nobility themselves. These latter, called *basses*, or common and regular dances, although sometimes very fast, did not admit of jumping, violent movements or extraordinary contortions. The dance most in fashion in France, and probably in England, at this period was the *gaillarde*; it was performed with much form and state. At the opening music of hautbois and tambourine, the two performers, lady and gentleman, stood opposite each other, advancing, bowing, and retiring; these advancements and retirings were done in steps to the time of the music, and continued until the instrumental accompaniment stopped; then the gentleman made his bow to the lady, took her by the hand, thanked her, and led her to her seat. In this or some similar measure the stalwart Edward was proud to exhibit the accomplishments of his elegant little daughter before his Continental visitors. Perhaps his active, ambitious mind was already planning for her the marriage with Charles the Dauphin, eldest son of Louis XI. of France, whose kingdom he, to this end, threatened with invasion two years later. Besides dancing, Elizabeth was instructed in the French language; she could read and write English too, an accom-

plishment rare among the nobility in those unsettled times, but which proved almost invaluable to her in later years.

King Edward obliged the French to submit to a tribute in order to avoid war with England. He resigned to Louis all claims on Aquitaine and Guienne, and in the treaty formed between the kings Elizabeth was betrothed to Charles, the ceded provinces to be part of her dowry, and of the tribute part was to be used for the maintenance of the princess. The historian Comines affirms that from her tenth year Elizabeth was styled *Madame la Dauphine*; but our heroine was destined never to set foot on French soil; her would-be father-in-law changed his mind ere she was grown up; he broke his contract with England by openly negotiating with Maximilian of Austria for the hand of his daughter Margaret. This was in 1482, when Edward's health was rapidly declining. It is by some asserted that his death was hastened by worry occasioned by the failure of his plans for his favourite daughter.

With her kind father's death Elizabeth's troubles began. On the seizure of her eldest brother, Edward V., on his way to London, by his designing uncle Gloucester, the princess again shared her mother's flight to the sanctuary of Westminster, and her gloomy imprisonment there; and this time she was no thoughtless child, but a tender-hearted young woman of seventeen, making her mother's sorrows her own, and feeling, perhaps, for the death of her brothers in the Tower, keener grief than Elizabeth Woodville was capable of. All historians agree that the fair Yorkist was most devotedly attached to her own family; indeed, subsequent events prove her to have been a most loving and lovable lady, winning for herself the fond esteem of all those of her own sex with whom she was brought in contact. Even during the sad reign of King Richard, while her mother remained incarcerated at Westminster, or suffered most unpleasant restraint, Elizabeth, the guest of poor Queen Anne at Christmas time, received not merely formal kindness but real love from the timid, melancholy sufferer, who treated her at all times as a sister.

It was at her aunt's court that Elizabeth found opportunity to communicate with persons in high office who, disgusted with Richard's tyrannical rule, were still desirous of placing on the throne a scion of the house of York. Overtures had already been made in secret between Elizabeth's mother and the clever and influential Margaret Beaufort, mother to Henry of Richmond, for the union of their children in marriage. The present husband of this lady, Lord Stanley, held the office of steward in the king's household, a post which he had also filled in the days of his brother, and through this nobleman a strong but secret party was formed in Richard's very palace, in favour of the young princess and her

affianced husband; so that when Henry of Richmond returned from his exile, raised an army and claimed the crown, the numerous force with which the king marched out to meet him was very materially weakened by the desertion, at the last moment, of Lord Stanley and his brother Sir William, who, as chamberlain of North Wales, could command a powerful following.

At the time of the battle of Bosworth Field, Elizabeth was at Sheriff-Hutton in Yorkshire, where her uncle had lodged her since the death of Queen Anne. Why she was sent there is not clear, but very likely Richard was enraged at her refusal to become his wife; for this infamous man, even before the death of his queen, had seriously entertained the idea of marrying his niece, and he would probably have accomplished his purpose had he not feared to decrease his waning popularity. The enemies of the princess represent her as impatient for the death of Anne and eager for union with her uncle, but the charge is preposterous in the face of documentary evidence that she was at that very time furthering in every way the cause of Richmond.

No sooner was Henry VII. proclaimed king than he sent from the battlefield a trusty knight, Sir Robert Willoughby, to fetch Princess Elizabeth from Sheriff-Hutton to London. We may imagine the delight with which she at once commenced her journey, and the pleasure with which she welcomed the numerous lords and ladies who voluntarily offered their services as escort on the road. Now would the king's daughter again be treated with respect due to her rank,—but a cruel mortification awaited her. Arrived in London, she was placed under the care of her mother at Westminster, but her affianced husband was in no hurry to conclude the marriage for which the princess and her followers had so long been scheming. Henry entered London, August, 1485; but in his coronation, which followed almost immediately, Elizabeth was not included; nor did the wedding take place till the following January. In the interval, Henry was twice reminded in council of his pledge to the Yorkists, and the assembled Houses of Parliament had given unanimous support of a petition that “the King would take to wife and consort the Princess Elizabeth, which marriage they hoped God would bless with a progeny of the race of kings.” Politically it was evident that Henry determined that his claim to the throne should be acknowledged by the country as quite distinct from his wife. The first of our Tudor sovereigns possessed a powerful mind, crafty and calculating, a born despot—a man who would not suffer himself to be guided in matters of State by anyone, least of all a woman. Elizabeth might well feel humiliated that her dazzling beauty appeared to have no charms for Henry. It was said that his affections were planted elsewhere, that he was deeply attached to Katherine Herbert, a companion of his childhood, and daughter of his former protector; and

according to another rumour he was engaged to a lady of the name of Lee, but she released him for fear of ruining his prospects.

These reports were in every mouth in the five months during which the marriage was delayed. At last the wedding day was fixed for January 18, 1486, at Westminster, and the ceremony performed with "all religious and glorious magnificence at court, and by the people with bonfires, dancing, songs and banquets." So says Andreas, the poet-laureate, of "lovely lady Bessy," but it was not a very fitting time for festivity, for the plague was raging in London, and the royal exchequer well-nigh empty.

A dispensation from the Pope was required for this marriage, but time to procure it could not be urged as an excuse for delaying the ceremony, for it arrived some time afterwards. Henry refused the first and second dispensation sent, because the wording did not please him. Elizabeth was acknowledged as the undoubted heir of Edward IV. In the third, which he finally accepted, was inserted a clause to the effect that, in the case of Elizabeth's death without offspring, the succession was to be continued in any children he might have by another wife.

Fortunately, the Queen had not long been married before she gave hopes of becoming a mother. During the summer she resided at Winchester, and here, September 20, she gave birth to a son. According to custom, Elizabeth had withdrawn from her courtly circle, for some time before her *accouchement*, to the privacy of a chamber where everything was prepared for the event. The furniture and hangings were of the heaviest and most costly description, but as all light and air were as far as possible excluded from the apartment, the effect must have been very depressing. Following court etiquette, from the time the Queen took to her room she saw no one but her ladies. Elizabeth was cheered by the company of her mother and sisters, who were living at court, and also by the clever, energetic Margaret Beaufort, the king's mother, who, having taken a great liking for her gentle daughter-in-law, found immense pleasure in arranging everything about her son's wife in right queenly fashion. This dreary period of seclusion terminated for Elizabeth six weeks sooner than was expected, but the babe was healthy notwithstanding.

Arthur was the name chosen for the infant prince by his delighted father. For generations it had been the fashion among the Plantagenets to call any child for whom high hopes were entertained, Edward, after the illustrious and popular Edward III.; but Henry of Richmond, who had passed his whole life either in Wales or the kindred land of Brittany, and claimed, through his grandfather, Owen Tudor, descent from the ancient British kings, was learned in the folk-lore of those parts, and proud to recall the fame of King Arthur of the Round Table in the name of his son and heir. His consort, too, could

claim a share of the same distinction, for was she not the heiress of the Mortimers, who traced their descent equally far back? In right of these ancestors, Elizabeth held much land in Herefordshire and the adjoining counties, besides the large possession of Clare.

After the birth of her eldest son, Elizabeth was long in regaining her strength. All through the autumn she suffered from an ague, and her mother-in-law continually laments her "crazy health."

The Queen's coronation did not take place till 1487, and then the crown was conferred on her as Henry's wife. Indeed, the King might have postponed it still further had not the partisans of York showed sundry signs of discontent that it had not already taken place. Elizabeth was residing at Greenwich, and the ceremony, like most similar ones of that age, was graced with a magnificent procession. "The Queen came by water from Greenwich, attended by the Mayor, Sheriffs, and Aldermen, and many citizens, chosen some from each craft, wearing their liveries, in barges freshly furnished with banners and streamers of silk. One of the barges, called the *Bachelor's*, contained many gentlemanly pageants well and curiously devised to do her highness's sport and pleasure. Henry received her at the Tower, and conducted her to the royal apartments, where open household was kept, and frank sport for all the court. On the morrow, after dinner, the Queen was royally apparelled, having about her a kirtle of white cloth of gold of damask, and a mantle of the same suit furred with ermines, fastened before her breast with a great lace curiously wrought of gold and silk, and rich knobs of gold at the end tasselled; her fair yellow hair hanging down plain behind her back, with a caul (or net work) of pipes over it, and a circlet of gold richly garnished with precious stones upon her head." This was indeed a figure worthy to be the central object of the rich picture presented by the pageant which conducted her to Westminster in an open litter, hung with cloth of gold of damask, and having large pillows of down covered with the same material. The canopy over her head was borne by four newly made Knights of the Bath. Quite a poetical spirit appears to have animated the Londoners on this occasion, for in many parts of the city, instead of the usual absurd conceits meeting her eye, she was welcomed by fair children, arrayed in angelic costume, singing sweet songs as she passed. The Queen's near relations and some ladies of note accompanied her in litters almost as gorgeous, and six baronesses, on gaily dressed horses, followed close behind; but neither on this day nor the next, on which the ceremony of coronation was performed and a state banquet held, did King Henry appear in public. Unwilling to be present where not the King but the beautiful Queen was the centre of attraction, but anxious to see without being seen, he stationed himself behind a latticed screen in Westminster Abbey to watch the proceedings; and, again, at the banquet in Westminster Hall,

he was hidden with his mother in the recess of a window. All passed off well, the young Queen comporting herself with a dignified affability which rejoiced the hearts of her loving subjects. Two days later she returned to Greenwich.

It has been said that Henry VII. treated his Queen with harshness and neglect, but it seems that this inference is founded on his disregard for her public rights apart from himself. He was not an affectionate man, and little sympathy existed between them. Elizabeth never complained of her husband. Perhaps she was too amiable and gentle to do so under any circumstances; but should we not have found some record among the writings and letters of Margaret Beaufort, who could not have loved the Queen more tenderly had she been her own child?

Rumour was also current that Henry was unkind to the Queen's mother, Elizabeth Woodville, because she was not present at her daughter's coronation, and that he shut her up in Bermondsey Abbey, and deprived her of her dowry because she countenanced the insurrection of Lambert Simnel, who had impersonated the Earl of Warwick; but it is hardly likely the Queen-Dowager would have favoured anyone claiming the inheritance of her children, and probably she was well aware of the existence of the true Earl of Warwick, though since Henry's accession he had been hidden from public view in the Tower. This poor idiot son of the Duke of Clarence, the story of whose birth at sea we have already related, was so foolish that he was as helpless as an infant. As a child he had lived with his cousin Elizabeth of York and her brothers and sisters at Sheen, and now, to prove that Simnel was an impostor, the imbecile earl was brought out of the Tower and conducted with much show through the streets of London, and finally down to Sheen, the beautiful sylvan retreat where the Queen, when not at Winchester, passed most of her time.

In November, 1489, the Princess Margaret was born at Westminster, and eighteen months later the Queen gave birth, at Greenwich, to her second son, Henry, a fine, vigorous child, destined to occupy his father's throne, and attain an unenviable notoriety in the annals of English history. The next year a princess was added to the royal family, and named Elizabeth, in memory of the Queen's mother, who had recently died in her retreat at Bermondsey; and almost immediately afterwards the country was disturbed by the rebellion of Perkin Warbeck, who impersonated the Duke of York, one of the murdered princes, declaring he had escaped from the Tower. For several years the King, Queen, and country suffered much anxiety from the young man's pretensions. Both in person and courage he undoubtedly resembled Edward IV., and it is probable that he was a natural son of that monarch, born in Holland; but it is significant that he appeared in public just as his supposed mother was dead. Fruitless search was made in the Tower for the bodies of

the murdered princes. Many influential men believed in him, and the King of Scotland greatly offended Henry by siding with the pretender. Elizabeth lost one of her earliest friends and defenders of her rights when Sir William Stanley was executed on suspicion of favouring Warbeck. The Lady Katherine Gordon, whom James of Scotland had given in marriage to the adventurer, was, after the final capture of her husband, consigned to the care of the gentle Queen, and lived under her protection till she married again. The death of Warbeck, who was hanged at Tyburn, in November, 1499, brought the troubles of civil war to a close. The subsequent execution, on Tower Hill, of the unoffending Earl of Warwick must have excited the Queen's pity, but her voice would never have been listened to in a matter of state policy.

In the next year Henry removed his consort and his children from their happy home at Sheen over the sea to Calais, because the plague was raging so fearfully throughout England that he was afraid for them to remain in the land. At Calais, too, which we must remember was then English territory, it was easier to confer with foreign powers, and a friendly interview took place between the English King and Queen and Philip, Archduke of Austria. The result was the arrangement of a marriage between Charles, afterwards the famous Emperor Charles V. of Germany, and little Princess Mary. This contract was never completed, but another, made between Arthur, Prince of Wales, and Katherine of Arragon, was fulfilled in the following year, the wedding being solemnised in London, whither the court had now returned; but five months later news was brought to the King and Queen at Greenwich of the sudden death of their much-beloved son and heir. The blow seems to have fallen with equal severity on both father and mother. The silver lining to this dark cloud appeared for Elizabeth in Henry's increased sympathy; the sorrowing parents, consoling one another in the hour of affliction, drew closer together than ever they had done in times of prosperity. Elizabeth was exceedingly kind to the young Spanish widow; indeed, the records of her household bear witness to her kindness to all in trouble, more especially her sisters and near relations. In this particular Elizabeth's conduct forms a striking contrast to that of her namesake of Woodville. She used no undue influence for their promotion, sought not to enrich them at the cost of others, but relied solely on the sacrifice of her own luxuries, and of what many a private gentlewoman would consider necessities. By her gifts to the poor, and her thoughtful care for the comfort and independence of her relations, she sometimes involved herself in debt; the scant allowance of new clothes, the entries of turned and mended dresses, worn by one so fair, who might be supposed to take special pleasure in personal adornment, are a touching evidence of her goodness of heart.

The Queen survived her eldest son only two years. Grief at his loss had preyed sadly on her spirits and delicate health. She had already given birth to six children—Arthur, Margaret, Mary, Henry, Elizabeth, and Edmund—and her *accouchement* of the seventh drew near. It was winter time, and, from what motives it is impossible now to discover, the Queen chose the gloomy Tower Palace for her retreat rather than either of her favourite resorts of Greenwich or Hampton Court. On this occasion she did not observe so closely the dismal etiquette of retiring to her chamber. She spent Christmas at Richmond, apparently sharing in the festivities, for the usual sums were paid to the musicians, whom she always patronised liberally, and she also beguiled the time, when the weather was fine, with excursions on the river. Early in February, 1503, a princess was born, and named Katherine after her aunt, Lady Courtney, whose husband, having fallen into disgrace and imprisonment, was succoured by the Queen and kept in attendance on her person. For a few days all went well, and the doctor had left London for his home at Gravesend, when suddenly unfavourable symptoms came on, and before he could reach his royal patient she was beyond mortal help. Her infant survived her only a few days.

The funeral obsequies of this Queen were on a scale of magnificence corresponding to the display made at her coronation. The embalmed body lay in state in the choir of St. Mary's in the White Tower. To-day a visitor to this empty chapel, with its massive pillars and round arches, cold and bare in rigid Norman simplicity, must draw on his imagination to picture the same chamber when hung with rich tapestries, the many flickering candles round the windows revealing the form of the architecture, while those on the hearse itself shed a pale light on the white cross and black velvet covering of the leaden coffin in which the royal remains were enclosed. Here the corpse remained for over a week, when it was borne in sad procession along the coronation route from the Tower to Westminster. Instead of the youthful Queen in her open litter, a figure dressed in her royal robes was seen by the public in a chair of state; but all her mourning subjects knew the mortal remains of their beloved Queen were contained in the coffin beneath. The car was drawn by six horses, trapped in black velvet, and behind rode eight maids of honour, "in the saddest and simplest attire they had," with thread handkerchiefs hanging down and tied under their chins. Conspicuous among the banners was one with the Queen's motto, "Humble and reverend." And as the procession passed through the city, where but sixteen years before children had welcomed her with mirthful singing, white-robed virgins, in groups of thirty-seven—the number corresponding with the deceased Queen's age—each holding a lighted taper, stood in mournful silence, while the sad *cortège* slowly passed them.

Elizabeth of York lies buried in the famous chapel in Westminster Abbey which bears the name of Henry VII. Her remains repose by those of her lord, beneath the splendid monument erected in the centre of the building. The elaborate bronze railings by which it is surrounded have preserved the exquisitely designed recumbent statues from injury, but an ordinary visitor to the Abbey, peeping through the gates, cannot see to advantage the Queen's sweet face and graceful form.

At the time of her death Henry made great profession of grief, but he was soon anxious to marry again. The miserly habits and other vices which disgraced his later years became prominent only when the influence of his amiable and loving wife was withdrawn. Hearing that the Queen-Dowager of Naples possessed a large dowry, he made proposals to her, but withdrew them on learning that her property was seized by her husband's successor. Later he was in treaty for the hand of Margaret, Duchess-Dowager of Savoy, but before the arrangements were concluded, ill-health warned him to prepare for another world. He died on the 21st of April, 1509, having outlived his consort only six years.



From a Miniature

J.W. Knight

KATHERINE OF ARRAGON.

Queen of Henry 8th

LONDON VIRTUE & CO

KATHERINE OF ARRAGON.

THE name of the first consort of Henry VIII. brings up before the minds of most of us a middle-aged, dignified lady, whose sad face is set in a sort of three-cornered frame, forming the front to a dark veil hanging heavily over her shoulders. We recall, too, at least the substance of the words put into her mouth by Shakespeare:—

“Would I had never trod this English earth,
Or felt the flatteries that grow upon it !
Ye have angels’ faces, but Heaven knows your hearts.
What will become of me now, wretched lady ?
I am the most unhappy woman living.”

We pity the forsaken wife in a general careless way, but her coldness and formality repel us. A closer study of her history should increase our interest in this estimable and unfortunate princess.

Katherine (or Catalina, as she was called in her native land) came into the world somewhat prematurely, and at an inconvenient moment. Her mother, Isabella of Castile, was travelling from the camp of her victorious army to her capital, Toledo, when she was detained at the small town of Alcala di Finari by the birth of this her youngest child. Fortune smiled on the parentage and childhood of the little Infanta. The purest Spanish blood flowed in her veins; each of her parents was an independent sovereign, her mother being Queen of Castile and her father King of Arragon. The marriage of the rulers was the union of these two most powerful states in Spain, which, while retaining their individuality so far as concerned internal rule, became as one with regard to the outside world. When the little Infanta was in her cradle the brightest day in all its history was dawning for her country. The fiery Spaniards, under their talented and enlightened sovereigns were fast completing the expulsion from the Peninsula of the hated Moors, for centuries the dread of the Christians and the curse of the land. Katherine was born on the 15th of

December, 1485, and thus had not completed her fourth year when Granada, the Moorish capital, fell into the hands of her parents, who immediately, with their young family, took up their residence in the world-famed Alhambra. In this beautiful and romantic palace, as perfect a heaven upon earth as all the cunning of the East could devise, Katherine's childhood passed happily by. The exquisitely proportioned buildings had been devised to afford every comfort in a hot climate: between the massive towers the numerous courts were provided with shady gardens surrounded by slender marble pillars supporting elegant arches, closely resembling the foliage of palm-trees, and above them galleries with windows and colonnades. The material used in the building is a reddish earth and stones, but it is in the delicacy and wealth of ornamentation that its marvels chiefly lie. Well may its columns bear the inscription, "Look closely on my beauties, for you will find in them a commentary on decoration." Stucco and plaster, with glazed tiles, colours, and gold, are the materials employed. Forbidden by the Koran to imitate animal life, the Moslem artists devoted all their energies to geometrical ornamentation, curiously involved inscriptions, and arabesques. Those who know this style of architecture only from prints or from the court in the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, imitating a small portion of the Alhambra, can have but a faint idea of the delights of this wonderful building, standing as it does on a lower ridge of the Sierra Nevada, commanding a fine view of the snow-capped mountain peaks above and the fertile valley below. Here, on the hottest summer day, deliciously cool water, drawn from the mountains, bubbled up from innumerable fountains and trickled over marble pavements in small shady gardens, where flourished the brightest and sweetest of flowers. Here, all unknowing, the royal children would learn to appreciate beauty of form and colour. Nor were sterner studies neglected: learned tutors were appointed to instruct them in all branches of education, and Isabella herself, reckoned the most accomplished princess of her age, superintended her daughter's lessons as often as she could steal time from the business of state. At a very early age Katherine could speak and write in Latin, the language of the Church; and this acquirement was of much service to her when she first arrived in our own country, and knew no English. Indeed, through this medium alone could she communicate with her first husband and his family. When quite a little girl she was betrothed to Prince Arthur, the heir to the English crown, and was styled Princess of Wales. This friendly alliance was of greater political importance to England than to Spain. Our island was but just recovering from a long period of internal misrule, and the fortunes of the monarchs who had lately occupied her throne were most insecure. On the other hand, Katherine's parents were already very wealthy, and their country almost at the height of its power, for, before the Infanta left her native land, Columbus,

aided by her mother, had opened to her countrymen the path to the riches of the New World.

Katherine was in her sixteenth year when, in 1501, she was called upon to exchange the sunshine of her natal clime of Granada for the cloudy and chilly one of England. Attended by a noble train she left Granada for Corunna, whence she embarked, but a succession of storms drove the ships back to the Spanish coast. Altogether the journey occupied several months, and it was late autumn when at length she landed at Plymouth, where all classes received their future Queen with every demonstration of joy. When Henry VII. heard of her arrival he dispatched some of the highest of the nobility, and soon set out himself with Prince Arthur to meet her on the way. The season being exceedingly wet, the roads were almost impassable, and very slow progress was made by either party. And now a difficulty arose on a point of etiquette quite foreign to the English mind. The four bishops, and the governess and other ladies in charge of the Infanta, were unwilling to break through the custom of their country, that the bride should not be seen by her betrothed or his relations till the time of the marriage ceremony; but the King took the advice of his council, that "as the Spanish Infanta was in the heart of his dominions, Henry was master, and might look on her if he liked." To this decision Katherine's guardians were obliged to yield with the best grace they could. The first interview took place at Dogmersfield; Henry having seen and spoken with the Princess himself, next introduced his son. They visited Katherine in her chamber, when she and her ladies called for minstrels, and "with great goodly behaviour and manner solaced themselves with dancing."

By slow stages the Infanta and her Spanish retinue reached Kennington Palace, near Lambeth, where she lodged till she made her entrance into the City, on the eve of her marriage, amid the shows and pageantry erected for her diversion. The Londoners did their best to honour the "acceptable and well-beloved stranger," and exhibited great curiosity to see her as she rode through the streets on a mule, her saddle being shaped something like an armchair; she wore a broad-brimmed hat over a carnation-coloured coif, while her rich auburn hair fell loosely over her shoulders. The personal appearance of Katherine seems to have pleased her future husband as well as his parents. She is described as good-looking and attractive, if not remarkably beautiful. What she, accustomed to the climate of southern Spain, must have thought of the murky one of our English November, we have no clue to discover, but all who have lived in a sunny land, and entered ours in that dreary month, may imagine her feelings. Poor Katherine! it was well for her she did

not know that she was destined never to revisit her happy home, and that she had left behind the sunniest days of her life.

All the details of the marriage ceremony and the festivities which followed are set forth at length in Stowe. We have only space to give an outline of them. From the bishop's palace, hard by St. Paul's Cathedral, Katherine emerged on the 14th of November, led by a fine-looking boy of nine years old, no other than Prince Henry, the young Duke of York, afterwards her second husband. The bride was attired in a fashion unknown in this country: her white satin dress was very full in the sleeves and the bodice, and the skirt, set out by round hoops worn beneath it, gave the wearer the appearance of standing in a tub or drum; over the coif of white silk, a rich white silk lace mantilla, bordered with precious stones, almost entirely veiled her face and shoulders. In the cathedral, which we must remember was the old building, not the present one, a sort of bridge some six feet from the ground was erected the whole length of the nave, and in its centre was a raised platform, capable of holding eight persons. As Prince Henry led the bride up one side of this mount, Prince Arthur, also dressed in white satin, ascended the other, and the nuptial ceremony was performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by nineteen bishops, but how many of the officiating clergy were permitted to ascend the daïs is a question we cannot pretend to answer. King Henry adopted his favourite plan for seeing without being seen; with the Queen, he watched the ceremony from a closely latticed box he had caused to be erected on the north side of the mount. On the south side was a stage for the lord mayor and aldermen, and the people below could all have a good view of the procession, for as soon as they were married the bride and bridegroom followed the bishops and priests to the altar, and behind them walked a hundred ladies and gentlemen in costly apparel. After mass the bridal dinner was served in the bishop's palace, and the following week a tilting match, with quaint devices, in which the grotesque mingled with the magnificent, took place at Westminster. St. Katherine, the bride's namesake, with her wheel, the Queen's personal device, the pomegranate, and the castle, the emblem of Castile, figured prominently in the show; but a regular allegorical display was made of the Prince as Arcturus and the Princess as Hesperis, the western star, and a very long line of ancestors was introduced. After this came an entertainment of right regal grandeur, in Westminster Hall, at which both the bride and bridegroom danced, as did others of the royal family. At one end of the hall a grand daïs was erected, but here, according to the etiquette of those times, the sexes were separated. The King only sat next the Queen; on his side were the princes and nobles, and on hers the princesses and ladies. When the time arrived for amateur dancing, it was customary for a gentleman to come down from the

King's side and a lady from the Queen's, perform together, and return to their places; but the bride and bridegroom could not dance together because they did not know the same step, so first Prince Arthur danced with his beautiful aunt, Princess Cicely, and then Princess Katherine and one of her ladies also danced two base dances, probably like the minuet; but what appears to have given most pleasure to the King, Queen, and court, was the performance of little Henry and his sister Margaret, certainly a lively measure, for the Prince, finding himself impeded by his state dress, "suddenly threw off his robe and danced in his jacket with the said Lady Margaret in a goodly and pleasant manner."

When the festivities were ended the Prince and Princess of Wales took up their residence at Ludlow Castle. From here they ruled the Principality, holding a miniature court in this fortress home of the lords of the marshes. Here, five months after his marriage, Prince Arthur expired; he had always been delicate, and some have thought that he died of decline, but other historians lead us to believe it was typhus fever or plague. During the short time the young couple lived under one roof, able to converse only in formal Latin, no personal attachment had been formed between them. The surest proof of this is that Arthur, in a hastily made will, left all his personal effects to his favourite sister Margaret, to the entire exclusion of his wife.

On the death of her husband the unfortunate Katherine was left in a very forlorn condition. True, good Queen Elizabeth was exceedingly kind, sending a litter specially draped with black for her convenience in travelling to London, showing her personal attention, and settling her in the Croydon palace; but, far from her own people and her native land, what her parents naturally wished for the widow was that she should return home, and well would it have been for her had she been permitted to do so. But of the dowry of £200,000 agreed to by Ferdinand and Isabella, half had already been paid, and Henry VII. had no mind to restore the money he had once handled, and refused to grant her the third of her late husband's income, to which she was entitled, unless she remained to spend it in England. Her parents, on the other hand were unwilling to receive their daughter back penniless. Henry then proposed that she should remain in England to marry his younger son Henry, now the heir-apparent. A dispensation from the Pope for this purpose was without difficulty obtained, and we should here note that although the Princess herself wrote to King Ferdinand that "she had no inclination for a second marriage in England," she did not mention any scruple of conscience against a union with her brother-in-law, because, as was well known, she had been Arthur's wife only in name. If she had believed herself about to commit what her Church declared a grievous sin, she would certainly have urged that as an excuse, for a dutiful daughter of so bigoted a member

of the Church of Rome as was her mother, Queen Isabella, could not fail to be most attentive to her religious duties.

In June, 1503, Katherine was solemnly betrothed to Prince Henry, then a boy of twelve. The fulfilment of the contract was naturally postponed for a time, and during these years the Princess was very unhappy, as appears from the letters she wrote to her father, some of which, intercepted by the wily Henry, would seem never to have left this country. The English king treated his daughter-in-law extremely shabbily; his good queen and her own mother were soon removed by death, and the Spanish Minister at the English court had no regard for her interests. While Ferdinand withheld the remainder of her dowry, Katherine was not allowed to maintain a separate establishment, but lived as a dependent at the King's court, without money to keep up the handsome wardrobe which she had brought from Spain, or to make even small necessary presents to her faithful servants. Added to this, she long suffered from an intermittent fever, for which in those days no cure was known. Two years after the solemn betrothment, on the day the Prince completed his fourteenth year, King Henry caused his son to sign in secret, but before influential persons as witnesses, an act protesting against it and renouncing the contract he had formerly made him sign. By this artful device the wily, double-faced King Henry could break off the engagement should he find it expedient to do so. Various have been the conjectures concerning the motives for this base proceeding. Many persons asserted that it was caused by a desire of alarming Ferdinand, and extorting from him more advantageous conditions for her second marriage; but the real reason seems to have been Henry VII.'s own desire to marry Joanna, Katherine's eldest sister, himself. This lady, with her husband, Philip of Austria, sailing from the Netherlands, had been shipwrecked on the English coast, and they remained for a time the unwilling guests of the King at Windsor. Katherine joyfully welcomed her sister, but her pleasure was of brief duration, Philip was in bad health and he and his wife anxious to reach Spain as soon as possible, Joanna having succeeded her mother as Queen of Castile. A few months later the unfortunate Joanna, on the death of her husband, went out of her mind. Henry VII., however, would not believe Ferdinand's assurance that her malady was hopeless, and demanded the rich widow in marriage for himself. This move was made by Henry almost directly after he had required his son to sign the paper renouncing Katherine. The connection between the two actions is obvious, for a father and a son married to two sisters was too much even for those times. Henry's scheme for himself failed through the continued insanity of Joanna, and he then dropped the idea of breaking his son's engagement. But out of this proceeding sprang all Katherine's future troubles; so soon as it was a matter of convenience to Henry VIII. to get rid of her, he immediately returned to

this his boyish protest as a matter of conscience. The object of frightening Ferdinand was certainly secured, for he almost immediately authorised his ambassador not only to pay over the remainder of his daughter's dowry but to concede an extra condition, viz., that no part of her fortune, whether already paid or to be paid, should be restored in any case.

Young Prince Henry, in the perversity of human nature, finding that his father intended to deprive him of his affianced bride, grew very much in love with Katherine, and his fancy was encouraged rather than checked by an order that he should not be allowed to see her. But the father's days on earth were drawing to a close, and in his last hours he gave his consent, and even urged his son to marry the Princess, whom he felt to have treated unfairly. The King died in April, 1509, and in June of the same year the wedding took place. From the fact that historians differ as to time and place, some naming Greenwich and others the Bishop of Salisbury's house in Fleet Street, we may conclude that the ceremony was private, the public rejoicing being reserved for June the 24th, when the coronation of the royal pair took place at Westminster. Nothing was spared to render the festivities worthy of the occasion, and no inconsiderable portion of the vast sum of gold hoarded by Henry VII. was expended to do honour to it. The chief attraction contrived for gentle Katherine's amusement shows the barbarous taste of the age. An enclosure in front of Westminster Palace formed a hunting-ground, and the company assembled to witness the sport; the unfortunate deer, turned into the narrow space, leapt the railings to escape from the dogs, pursued by the hunters, who slaughtered them in the palace itself, and then presented the blood-stained carcasses to the Queen. The chief banquet was held in Westminster Hall, a special dais being erected at one end for the King and Queen. But the coronation festivities came to an abrupt termination owing to the death of Henry's grandmother, the Duchess of Richmond, a lady of great ability and entitled to every honour, as up to within two days of the coronation she had held the office of regent. Henry VIII. was now only in his eighteenth year, a fine young man, excelling in knightly exercises, but more fit to take the lead in manly sports than the management of a kingdom or even a court. Katherine, it seems, made all the arrangements for the coronation; she was at this time twenty-one, and, dressed as a bride in white satin embroidered with gold, with her beautiful auburn hair hanging down her back, she can scarcely have looked too old for the manly young king by her side.

Katherine was certainly very happy during the first years of her second marriage. Her letters to her father express the utmost satisfaction with her lot as Queen of England, and Henry wrote to Ferdinand, evidently in all sincerity, "as regards that sincere love which we have to the most serene queen, our consort; her eminent virtues daily more shine forth,

blossom, and increase so much, that if we were still free her we would choose for our wife before all other." Still they were a curiously assorted pair: Katherine, brought up like all *infantas* of Spain, in the strict observance of etiquette, was always stately and queenlike in her bearing, and perhaps maintained her dignity with peculiar care because Henry was inclined to great freedom of behaviour. Yet she possessed too much wisdom and tact ever to reproach her young husband for his conduct or to allow it to appear that she disapproved of his indulgence in those undignified pleasures to which he was so much addicted; and for Henry it should be said that he invariably treated his wife with respect, and though naturally impatient of aught that even resembled constraint, he for many years of their union never violated towards Katherine the rules imposed by good breeding and knightly courtesy to a lady, nay more, he showed a decided preference for her society.

In January, 1511, at Richmond Palace, Katherine gave birth to a son, who was named Henry, and christened by the Archbishop of Canterbury with great state; but scarcely were the rejoicings at his birth ended when the royal infant died. Katherine's grief for his loss was long and deep, but Henry, though much disappointed, soon turned his mind to pleasure, on the plea of diverting the bereaved mother. The entertainments then in vogue were pageantry and masquerades. Henry was not sufficiently amused by merely watching the somewhat tedious and unending show, however skilfully and elaborately devised. He loved to take part in it himself, and would frequently assume the *rôle* of one of the characters, and then in the midst of the scene or ballet fling off his disguise and present himself for approval to the Queen, who, feigning the utmost surprise, rewarded him with a kiss. Some idea of the insecurity of even royal property in these days, even in time of peace, may be gleaned from the record of what happened on this occasion. In the midst of the sports the populace, always allowed to look on from a distance at the pastimes, broke in upon the revellers, and stripped the King and his courtiers, ladies included, of their jewellery and rich dresses. The King was stripped to his doublet and drawers, but he treated it only as a jest, and when order was somewhat restored sat down to supper with his nobles in great merriment over their despoiled condition.

In this same year Henry became involved in a war with France. Pope Julius II. and Ferdinand of Spain easily persuaded the English king to unite with them in the invasion of France by holding out to the vainglorious young sovereign the hope of recovering his own rights in that kingdom, and obtaining the title of "Christianissimus," which the Pope intended to take from the French king and confer on him. The next year Henry, burning to win military laurels, himself crossed over to France to take the head of his army. In this campaign Henry very probably wore the coat of mail now preserved in the Tower

armoury. It is bright steel, handsomely engraved with various patterns, the Tudor rose and Katherine's emblem of a pomegranate being included in the design. The border to the skirt is inlaid with the initial letters of the King and Queen. Katherine accompanied her husband as far as Dover, and parted from him with great affection. She was appointed regent during his absence, and invested with almost sovereign power. Thomas Wolsey, lately taken into high favour, accompanied Henry as almoner and secretary, for his letters kept the Queen informed of her lord's health and doings, and many of her answers were addressed to him. They betray a wifely concern for Henry's personal safety, exceeding her desire for his military success. But at home Katherine paid careful attention to matters entrusted to her, and was not without her anxieties. The country was at war with Scotland, for, to Henry's exceeding annoyance, his brother-in-law had been secretly aiding the French. It was during the Queen's administration that the English won the decisive battle of Flodden Field, one of the most brilliant victories gained over Scotland; but Katherine should have no share in the blame which attached to the conquerors for their neglect to give decent burial to the fallen King James. By her orders the body was embalmed, and it was Henry who should have given commands for its disposal, instead of allowing it to remain for years in a disused room at Sheen.

Meantime Henry, in conjunction with his paid ally, the Emperor Maximilian of Germany, gained the Battle of the Spurs. In one of her letters to Wolsey, Katherine writes, "I think, with the company of the Emperor and his good counsel, his grace shall not adventure himself too much, as I was afraid of before. I was very glad to hear of the meeting of them both, which hath been to my seeming the greatest honour to the King that ever came to a prince." The Queen, a woman of much good sense, seems quite alive to the fact that Henry might need "good counsel." She would have felt more uneasy had she known that her fickle young husband, while out of her sight, was becoming enamoured of the beautiful Lady Tailbois, who, a few years later, bore him a son named Henry Fitzroy.

In the autumn Henry returned to England, and the victorious sovereigns met with every mark of affection on both sides. The next year, the peace concluded with France was sealed by the marriage of Henry's young sister Mary with Louis XII. The King and Queen accompanied the bride as far as Dover. The parting was a sad one, for, as Katherine well knew, the beautiful princess was leaving her heart in this country in the keeping of the Duke of Suffolk. This nobleman was a great favourite at court, and in the fêtes with which Henry beguiled the winter of 1514, he took a prominent part. On New Year's night he acted with the King in a masked ballet, in which four couples,

magnificently attired in blue velvet and cloth of silver, danced before the Queen, who was now recovering from her *accouchement*. Her infant, a son, unfortunately survived its birth but a few days. On the same night the French king died, and when the news was brought to England, Henry despatched Suffolk to Paris to bear a letter of condolence to Mary, charging him to look after her property. Before many weeks were over the widowed Queen had given her hand to her former lover, to the great scandal of the French court. Henry was very angry at the presumption of his favourite, but Katherine used her influence in their favour, and on their return to England in April they were received at court with due honour and publicly married from Greenwich Palace. Their nuptials were celebrated by a romantic fête, which must have dwelt long in the memory of all who took part in it. In the "merry month of May" Robin Hood and his merry men, personated by the archers of the Royal Guard, invited the King and the two Queens and their court to "enter the good greenwood and see how outlaws lived." They led the way to a sylvan bower, prepared amongst the fresh spring foliage in a thicket on Shooter's Hill, where a tempting repast of venison was set out. The royal ladies partook of the meal and were returning home in gay mood, when they were met by a car loaded with flowers and drawn by five horses, on each of which rode a pretty girl representing some different attribute of spring. At sight of the Queen the damsels began to sing, and preceding the royal party, continued a series of carols to the May till Greenwich Palace was reached. Henry concluded the outdoor amusements by riding races with Suffolk, but the ladies did not join in this sport; in fact Katherine never took part in the favourite English pastimes of hunting or hawking, which her husband loved and English ladies might enjoy, but which were quite unsuited to the dignity of a Spanish princess.

In February, 1516, Katherine gave birth to a daughter, named Mary, after the Queen of France, who was still a visitor at the English court. A few months later Henry's eldest sister, Margaret, Queen of Scotland, was driven by troubles at home to seek refuge with her brother. She, too, had married again, and brought with her her infant daughter, by the Earl of Angus. The Queen gave her a kindly welcome to Greenwich Palace, and the little Lady Margaret Douglas shared the nursery there with her cousin, Princess Mary, for over a year.

A serious riot among the apprentices of London occurred in May, 1517. The cause of grievance was the patronage of foreign artisans, particularly Spaniards, which lessened their own profits. Led on by a seditious preacher named Bell, and one John Lincoln, a broker, on some slight pretext they murdered or injured several strangers, pillaged their houses, and broke open the prisons. Many lives were lost in the fray, and the Duke of

Norfolk, some of whose retainers had suffered, was ordered to inflict on the citizens a severe punishment. He executed his commission with a right good will, arresting no less than two hundred and seventy-eight persons, and in those days of absolute monarchy anyone imprisoned was in danger of death. Many of the prisoners were mere youths, whose mothers and sisters sought the palace, and with loud cries entreated Katherine to help them. The Queen might have taken the attack on her countrymen as an insult to herself, but those who appealed to her had not misjudged her character for clemency and kindness. She was touched with compassion, and, accompanied by her two sisters-in-law, in sad attire she presented herself before Henry, entreating him to be merciful to the offenders. The intercession of the queens had more effect on the King than the appeal of the Recorder and aldermen, who came in mourning to the court to plead for the guilty. Nevertheless, he only accorded them pardon when, sitting at Westminster Hall and surrounded by his principal nobility and officers, the culprits came before him in white shirts, with halters round their necks, and on their knees craved mercy. Even the Queen's prayers only saved the lives of the younger and more innocent offenders. Henry was beginning to reveal the bloodthirsty spirit for which he afterwards became notorious: fourteen of the ringleaders suffered death. In this year the terrible form of plague known as *Sudor Anglicus* visited London. It was so malignant as to cause death in three hours. It attacked all classes; and the court, in fear, removed to Oxford.

Before the Princess Mary was two years old, Katherine bore another son, but he only lived a few hours; and from this time the troubles of Katherine's later life began. Despairing of male issue by his Queen, Henry now publicly owned Henry Fitzroy, his son by Lady Tailbois, and created him Duke of Richmond, a circumstance which Katherine bore with outward calm, but much secret pain and displeasure.

With Francis I., the new King of France, Henry was now on most friendly terms. In the autumn of 1518 the Princess Mary was affianced to his eldest son, and some months later the King was invited to stand godfather to the second, who was to receive the name of Henry. At this period the two powerful sovereigns of Europe, Francis I. and Charles V. of Spain, Emperor of Germany, were in competition for the friendship of the King of England. To stand well with Henry it was necessary to conciliate Cardinal Wolsey, now raised to the height of power, and fast amassing enormous wealth by an unscrupulous acceptance of the bribes of both. First minister, prime favourite, grand chancellor, Archbishop of York, cardinal, and sole legate, this famous churchman had nothing left to wish for but the papacy. Proud of his Continental influence, he even boasted of it to Henry; and Henry, no less vain-glorious, received these proofs of the favour shown

to Wolsey as homage offered to his own dignity and power, as well as the vast superiority of his favourite. To Wolsey Francis confided the whole arrangement of the ceremonial of the interview to be held between him and Henry near Ardres, that world-famed congress, the Field of the Cloth of Gold: the details of the etiquette, the precedence to be maintained by the guests, and the programme of fêtes, tournaments, masques, and balls for this festive meeting, at which it was intended that pomp and splendour should form a cloak for the real business of diplomaey. The date fixed was June, 1520, and the Cardinal planned that the King of England should advance towards Ardres, as far as was convenient to him, but without quitting that portion of his own territory still held in France, and that the French King should advance to meet him where he stopped. Thus the first visit would be paid by Francis to Henry, Wolsey assigning as a reason that as Henry crossed the sea expressly to see Francis, the latter could do no less than pass his own territory to meet Henry. All this time the Cardinal was in secret correspondence with Charles V., and that monarch, to secure the ear of the English King before Francis should see him, made an unexpected visit to Dover, while Henry and his Queen, having set out for France, had advanced only as far as Canterbury. Henry came in haste to welcome his wife's nephew with due honour, and conducted him to Canterbury to visit his aunt, whom he now met for the first time. Too late to prevent the French visit, as he would willingly have done, Charles departed with a promise from Henry that the English King would enter into no engagement with Francis prejudicial to the Emperor, and further that he would pay a visit to Charles at Gravelines before he returned home. The royal party assembled at Ardres consisted of the Kings and Queens of England and France, Mary, Queen-Dowager of France, and Louise of Savoy, Duchess of Angoulême, mother to Francis. Each sovereign brought a numerous train and rivalled the rest in display of gorgeous splendour during the whole of the three weeks that the congress lasted. Katherine here enjoyed close intercourse with Queen Claude the Good of France, a lady whose piety and refined tastes accorded well with her own. When the meeting broke up the King and Queen of England spent one day with the Emperor at Gravelines, as they had promised, and they entertained Charles V. and his aunt Marguerite, the able Governess of the Low Countries, for three days at Calais before sailing for England. Charles is said to have specially remarked on the good fortune of his kinswoman in sharing the throne of so magnificent a monarch as Henry, but within a very few years he had reason to change his mind.

We have mentioned Cardinal Wolsey's rapid rise to power, and dwelt on the important position he held, not only in England but on the Continent, because he had a very large share in bringing about the divorce between Katherine and the King.

The Queen was a woman of quick perception, and as the Cardinal acquired more and more influence over Henry, grew to mistrust and dislike him. The ostentatious display of his wealth, his undisguised assumption of power, and the voluptuous life which he led, alienated him from her esteem, and she soon perceived that his power was exercised more for his personal aggrandisement than for the glory or honour of his master; and Wolsey feared that she, whose power over her husband had till now been considerable, might one day open the King's eyes to the true character of his favourite, and so, in vulgar phrase, "there was no love lost" between them. Matters were not improved when Wolsey procured from the King a warrant for the execution of the Duke of Buckingham on some utterly groundless charge of sorcery and treason, merely because the unfortunate nobleman had offered him a trifling insult. The Duke had been one of Katherine's first friends in England, but her appeal to Henry to spare him was utterly disregarded.

In 1523 Charles V. paid a second visit to this country. Henry, as before, met him at Dover, and he visited the Queen at Greenwich; he came as a suitor for the hand of the Princess Mary, and the fickle Henry readily fell in with his proposals, although his little daughter, not yet seven years old, had been solemnly affianced to the Dauphin of France. Wolsey was now offended with the Emperor because he had failed to get him elected Pope. In what sort of esteem the proud but low-born Cardinal was held by the Emperor has been pithily preserved in the witty remark made by him when told of the death of Buckingham: "Then has the butcher's dog pulled down the fairest buck in Christendom." From this time all Wolsey's influence was directed against Charles V. and his kinswoman.

Shortly after the return of the English sovereigns from the Continent, Katherine had been annoyed by the attention paid by her husband to Mary Boleyn, a sister of the lady destined to be her supplanter. Although deeply wounded, Katherine, conducting herself with a calm dignity that enabled her to avoid slander, gently remonstrated with the young lady and put an end to the King's flirtation by getting her speedily married. Still the Queen continued secretly unhappy, as she felt that all her influence with Henry was slipping away; she had failed to bring him the male heir he so earnestly desired, and now that she was advancing to middle life and he still a gay young man, he evidently considered her past the age for having a right to the fidelity and affection which he had sworn to her at the altar. Dignified and thoughtful, Katherine, who had been nobly educated by her mother, the great Isabella, loved study and showed a decided preference for the society of the wise and good; with Sir Thomas More she was on terms of intimacy, and the learned Erasmus wrote in high praise of her wisdom and culture. A dignified

and cumbersome dress on her somewhat massive figure made her look older than she really was; and neither could she gallop by Henry's side in the field sports in which he delighted, nor dress up in the fantastic masqueradings in which he was wont to exhibit himself before his subjects. Her stately gravity unfitting her to take any part in these, his pleasures, seemed to him a tacit reproach for his too great indulgence in them.

The result of Henry's alliance with the Emperor Charles V., on that monarch's second visit to this country, was a sudden cooling of his friendship with France. This caused the return to England of Anne Boleyn, who, as quite a girl, had gone to the French court in attendance on Princess Mary, wife of Louis XII. Soon she was appointed maid of honour to Katherine, an event fraught with misery to the Queen; for although some historians have asserted that Henry had resolved on seeking a divorce from Katherine previously to his passion for Anne Boleyn, there can be little doubt that his eagerness to obtain it was greatly increased by his desire to wed her, however much he might put forward his conscientious scruples.

Henry's indifference so preyed upon Katherine's mind as to injure her health and spirits, impairing her personal attractions, and in spite of all her efforts to appear cheerful and light-hearted, increasing her habitual gravity into a fixed expression of melancholy. This made her still less pleasing to her husband, who disliked her the more for the change in her produced by his own unkindness. He revealed to his confessor his scruples about remaining the husband of his brother Arthur's widow, and made them an excuse for gradually alienating himself from her society.

There is no doubt that Wolsey at first encouraged the King to divorce Katherine, and caused the Queen to be carefully watched by his spies lest she should learn what steps were being taken in the matter, or communicate with her powerful nephew Charles V., to humour his master, and at the same time to degrade the Queen who had offended him by her disapproval of his vanity and ostentation, and to humiliate Charles, who had failed to obtain for him the papal throne.

At this juncture Wolsey had no difficulty in moving Henry against his enemy, the Emperor. Henry had always envied and secretly disliked him, and now that Charles had won the battle of Pavia and detained Francis I. a prisoner in Spain, the English king readily espoused the cause of the injured French monarch. No sooner had Francis regained his liberty than Wolsey, with an equipage of nearly a thousand men, was sent over to negotiate a marriage between him, or one of his sons, and the Princess Mary. The Cardinal was treated with every mark of respect that could be shown to a sovereign, and Mary was affianced to the Duke of Orleans, but very soon after it was every-

where stated that the Bishop of Tabres had raised the question of the legitimacy of the Princess.

To his Privy Council Henry first mentioned his anxiety as to the validity of his marriage in connection with this question: to the Queen herself he pretended that his only object in desiring a trial on the subject was that all question should be silenced with regard to their beloved daughter, and for a time Katherine allowed herself to be calmed, but in 1528 she discovered that he was really bent on obtaining a divorce, and openly declared her determination of opposing it.

Henry on consulting his bishops soon obtained a paper signed by the whole bench declaring his marriage with his deceased brother's wife contrary to divine law and public morals. It should be said that one signature was a forgery, that of good Bishop Fisher, who, in the course of Katherine's trial before the papal representatives, boldly stood forth and denied having put his name to it—a denial which cost him his life.

Henry anticipated no difficulty in obtaining a divorce from the Pope, except the opposition of the Emperor, and that he did not very much fear. However, Pope Clement VII. was at this time a prisoner in the hands of Charles, and even after regaining his liberty was unwilling to offend him, while, to retain the goodwill of the kings of England and France, who had united in his defence, he wished to make a show of complying with their wishes. Hence, even after many delays, when Clement at last despatched Cardinal Campeggio to England, empowering him and Wolsey to act as his vicegerents in the matter, no conclusion satisfactory to Henry was arrived at; and at the end of two years, in July, 1529, the Pope summoned the King and Queen of England to appear at Rome and take their trial there, an order utterly at variance with English law, and not for a moment to be thought of.

But we must notice the conduct of Katherine before the Papal legates. Soon after the arrival of Campeggio in England, he and Wolsey had an interview with the Queen to announce to her that they were about to hold a court of inquiry into her case. Addressing Wolsey, Katherine said: "For this trouble I may thank you, my lord York, because I ever wondered at your pride and vain-glory, abhorred your voluptuous life, and little cared for your presumption and tyranny; and therefore of malice you have kindled this fire, especially for the great grudge you bear to my nephew, the Emperor, whom you hate worse than a scorpion because he could not gratify your ambition by making you Pope by force. And therefore have you said more than once you could humble him and his friends, and you have kept true this promise; for of all his wars and vexations he may

only thank you. As for me, his poor aunt and kinswoman, what trouble you put me to by this new-found doubt, God knoweth, to whom I commit my cause."

At length the King and Queen were summoned to attend the court. Henry, when called, replied, "Here I am;" but the Queen, rising with great dignity from her seat, took no notice of the legates, but approaching Henry, knelt before him, and said, "That being a poor woman and a stranger in his kingdom, where she could hope neither for good advice nor for impartial judges in her emergency, she begged to know in what she had offended him? That she had been twenty years his wife, had borne him four children, and ever studied to please him. She appealed to his conscience whether she had not come to him a virgin, and declared that had she been capable of anything criminal she would consent to be turned away with ignominy. Their mutual parents had been wise and prudent princes with good and learned men for their advisers when her marriage with the King had been arranged. That, therefore, she would not acknowledge the court before which she appeared; for her advocates being subjects of the King and named by him, could not properly defend her rights." Having thus said, she arose from her knees, made a deep courtesy to the King, and without noticing the legates withdrew, and she steadily refused to recognise the court of inquiry on that or any subsequent occasion.

In the eyes of the Romish Church Katherine's case was a very strong one, for, as both she and Charles V. held, her marriage having been permitted by special dispensation from one Pope (Julius II.), it could not be invalidated by the decree of another.

Baffled and insulted by the Pope, and tormented on one side by the firmness of Katherine to maintain her rights, and on the other by the impatience of Anne Boleyn, Henry found himself in a very annoying position. Wolsey, on whose support he had depended, he now more than suspected to be a party to the uncalled-for delay in delivering judgment. The fact was, the Cardinal, on first urging the divorce, had believed Henry's passion for Anne a mere passing fancy, and counted on being able to bring about, to serve his own purpose, a marriage between the King and the beautiful and witty Duchess d'Alençon, sister to Francis I., whose portrait he had procured to tempt him; but when he found that the maid of honour was to be queen, he wished to prevent the divorce, well knowing that Anne disliked him intensely; and it was she who brought about his fall by discovering to the King his minister's real character and motives of action.

A way out of his difficulty was found for the King quite unexpectedly, and it made the finder's fortune. Henry happened to hear that in the opinion of one Thomas Cranmer, a skilful doctor in theology, the wisest course would be to consult the most learned men of all the universities in Europe, as the Pope could not give judgment on such a point in

opposition to the greatest theologians of his time, and it was well known that an anti-papal spirit now prevailed at many of the chief seats of learning. Cranmer was taken into the royal favour, and from this time we may date the beginning of the religious reformation in England. Henry despatched learned men to the universities of France, Italy, Germany, and Switzerland to obtain their opinion on the divorce, and the unanimous answer was that since the dispensation granted by Julius II. was contrary to Divine law it could not be valid. Next Henry got the chief prelates of his kingdom to address the Pope in order to obtain the divorce, threatening that a refusal would endanger the interests of his Holiness in England. Clement then offered Henry permission to have two wives, but that was not what the King desired. Repeated but vain efforts were made to induce the Queen to withdraw her appeal to the Pope, so at last, on the 14th of June, 1531, Henry finally separated from the Queen, and ordered her to retire to one of the royal residences in the country.

In anticipation of a sentence of excommunication from the Pope, Henry issued a proclamation that no bulls from Rome that could be prejudicial to the prerogatives of the crown should be henceforth received, under the most heavy penalties, and this was shortly followed by a law declaring the King the head of the Church in England, and the kingdom entirely outside the Pope's jurisdiction. In May, 1533, Katherine was summoned to appear at Dunstable, the place nearest to her residence, and she having refused to do so, the Archbishop of Canterbury pronounced sentence, declaring her marriage with Henry null and void, and a few days later the King's marriage with Anne Boleyn was confirmed, and her coronation announced for the 1st of June.

From the moment of her disgrace Katherine was separated from her daughter, though she humbly entreated that Henry would grant her permission to see her child. Nevertheless, her affectionate letters written to Mary at this time are full of good advice, urge the fulfilment of her duty to her father, and encourage her to study industriously. The words, "It is a great comfort to me to see that you keep your Latin, and fair writing and all," reveal the interest she took in the details of the Princess's education.

Katherine's health rapidly declined. She begged that she might come from Bugden to the neighbourhood of London for the benefit of medical advice, but this was not permitted. The fen country could be little suited to one reared in a southern clime. To Fotheringay Castle, which was offered to her, she refused to go unless taken by main force, but the climate of Kimbolton, to which she was compelled to remove at the close of 1534, was little less unhealthy. Every insult was heaped on the unfortunate Katherine after the divorce. The King gave orders that she should be styled, as the widow of Arthur,

“princess-dowager,” but she would not relinquish the title of queen, and her personal attendants entertained such respect and affection for her that several of them fell into disgrace and were dismissed from her service rather than displease their mistress in this particular. Spies surrounded Katherine and reported all the doings of her household to Henry. Of her own doings, poor lady, there was little to report. In spite of her feeble health she passed her time in religious exercises, rising in the night to pray, as had always been her custom, and in working handsome embroidery for the use of the Church. She steadily refused to renounce the title of queen, even when urged that Henry would withdraw his fatherly kindness from her daughter Mary unless she complied with his demands. She was further tempted with offers of wealth if she would consent to her own and her daughter’s degradation, a real temptation, for to her other ills the King had the meanness to add that of poverty. As pecuniary provision, Katherine was assigned the income of five thousand pounds a-year to which she had been entitled as the widow of Arthur, but scarcely a third of this sum was actually paid, not enough to defray the expenses of the very moderate household she desired to retain—only “her confessor, her physician, and her apothecary, two men-servants, and as many women as it should please his grace to appoint.” Thus her circumstances were straitened at the very time when with failing health she would most feel the want of those comforts to which from childhood she had been accustomed.

Feeling her death near at hand, Katherine again ineffectually entreated to see her daughter once more, that she might bless her before she died. This, her last request, was denied; yet one loving friend was with her during her last moments. Lady Willoughby d’Eresby, one of the maids of honour who had accompanied her from Spain, and since married an English nobleman, hearing of the approaching end of her dear mistress and countrywoman, travelled with all haste to Kimbolton, and, in spite of the opposition of the keepers, Chamberlayne and Bedingfield, made her way to the Queen’s apartment and never quitted it till Katherine expired. A letter to the King, dictated when her hand could no longer hold a pen, breathes the spirit with which the pious lady regarded her cruel husband, and is said to have touched for a moment even his hard heart. It is written in English, with which Katherine was now quite familiar, and runs thus:—

“MY MOST DEAR LORD, KING, AND HUSBAND,—The hour of my death now approaching, I cannot choose but out of the love I bear you to advise you of your soul’s health, which you ought to prefer before all considerations of the world or flesh whatsoever. For which yet you have cast me into calamities, and yourself into many troubles. But I forgive you all; and pray God to do so likewise. For the rest I

commend unto you Mary, our daughter, beseeching you to be a good father to her, as I have hitherto desired. I must entreat you also to respect my maids, and give them in marriage, which is not much, they being but three; and to all my other servants a year's pay besides their dues, lest otherwise they should be unprovided for. Lastly, I make this vow, that mine eyes desire you above all things. FAREWELL."

Katherine expired on the 18th of January, 1536, at Kimbolton Castle, in the fiftieth year of her age. The tapestried room in which she died is still shown, but all that remains there of her personal effects is one travelling trunk, covered with scarlet velvet, and bearing on its lid the initials "K. R." with the crown.

Katherine was deservedly regarded by the nation, among whom she was a persecuted stranger, with the deepest sentiments of respect and affection. Unlike many former queen consorts, she had never sought the undue advancement of foreigners in England, but had made the interests of her adopted country her own. A remarkable advance in horticulture was made under her patronage; and since she was kind and thoughtful for all her dependants, much of King Henry VIII.'s moderation in the early part of his reign may be traced to her influence.

She was buried at Peterborough; a brass plate alone marks her last resting-place in the abbey church, but the whole of the noble building may be regarded as her monument, for at the Dissolution of the monasteries Henry was induced to spare it, and even to erect Peterborough into a bishop's see as a tribute to her memory.

ANNE BOLEYN.

ANNE BOLEYN, though the daughter of a simple knight, was of illustrious descent, being closely allied to some of the chief of the English nobility. The Boleyn family, coming originally from France, had settled in the Eastern Counties. A younger brother, a London merchant, having amassed a large fortune in trade, towards the close of the fourteenth century bought as family property the manors of Blickling, in Norfolk, and Hever, in Kent. His son was created a knight by Richard III., and married Margaret, the daughter and co-heiress of the last Earl of Ormond, who brought him vast possessions. Sir Thomas Boleyn, the father of Anne, was the offspring of this union, and his first wife, Anne's mother, was Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter of the celebrated Earl of Surrey, afterwards Duke of Norfolk. Anne was probably born at Blickling Hall, and passed her earliest years there with her elder sister Mary and her brother George, in close intercourse with Thomas Wyatt (afterwards the celebrated poet) and his sister, their fathers being intimate friends.

Lady Boleyn was one of the court beauties when Henry VIII. first ascended the throne, and through the influence of her relations Sir Thomas was appointed a knight of the body, which led to further advancement and to his being employed on an embassy to France. In 1512 Anne lost her mother, and was placed under the care of a French governess. She now resided at Hever Castle with her brother and sister, and as she was a beautiful and most intelligent child, every care was taken with her education. At an early age she wrote letters to her father in English and also in French, Sir Thomas being evidently most anxious that she should master that language at an early age. She was also taught dancing and music.

Historians cannot agree as to how old Anne Boleyn was when she left England in the suite of the Princess Mary. It seems impossible to believe with some that she was only seven years old. To be of any use in that courtly train, and discharge her duties as fourth maid of honour, she must have been at least double that age. The autumn of 1514 was so

very stormy that Mary and her suite were detained some weeks at Dover before it was considered safe for them to cross the Channel, and even when they at last ventured on the sea a hurricane scattered the fleet, the ship containing the royal lady and her maids of honour was separated from the rest, and with great difficulty reached Boulogne harbour. The beautiful young Princess Mary was received by the French with every demonstration of respect and pleasure. At her entrance into Abbeville, where she was to be married to King Louis, Mary and a long train of ladies, handsomely dressed in velvet, rode on white palfreys gay with gorgeous trappings. On the wedding day the English suite was sumptuously entertained, and then sent home, Anne Boleyn and two other ladies being alone permitted to remain with their mistress. Our heroine was, perhaps, retained because she could talk French, of which language it is more than probable the young Queen was quite ignorant. After taking her share in all the festivities, Anne was sent to a French convent school near Paris. Her father, who had come over with King Henry's sister, arranged this before his return to England. It is quite possible that Anne was attached to Queen Mary's suite merely to secure for her a good French education.

After the death of Louis XII., which occurred in the February following his nuptials, and the marriage of his widowed Queen with Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, Anne Boleyn did not return to England with her former mistress, but remained at school, and later entered the service of the good and pious Queen Claude, consort of Francis I. Again there is a contradiction among historians as to dates, some stating that she returned to this country in 1521; some give 1524, and some even 1527. But it appears most probable that the young lady came back to England at the earliest date, and afterwards went abroad again. She was first recalled by an order from King Henry, in order that her relations might give her in marriage to Sir Piers Butler, as the best way of settling a dispute between his family and Sir Thomas Boleyn with regard to the property of Anne's great-grandfather, the last Earl of Wiltshire. She never did marry Sir Piers; perhaps her father abandoned the idea so soon as he observed that his beautiful and accomplished daughter had taken the fancy of King Henry, who now, meeting her at Hever Castle, noticed her for the first time. It is almost certain that Anne had accompanied Queen Claude to the congress of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, so Henry had seen her before; but it was her elder sister, Mary, who had engrossed his attention till Queen Katherine secured her marriage and removal from court. At this time Anne was about nineteen years of age, and admitted by all to be a most fascinating young lady, "a stature tall and slender, an oval face, black hair, good brunette complexion, beauty and sprightliness hovering on her lips in readiness for repartee, skilled in the dance and in playing on the lute."

The King had no sooner discovered this youthful beauty than he appointed her a maid of honour to Queen Katherine, in whose court she soon became a greater star than her mother before her. The enemies of Anne always accuse her of having been the first to suggest the divorce from Katherine, but we find on the other hand that if not unaware that Henry was in love with her, Anne was indifferent to him, for she was herself very much in love with Lord Percy, eldest son of the Earl of Northumberland. During all her eventful life Lord Percy was the only man whom our heroine regarded with any real affection, and he, though equally fond of her, was not free to choose his own mate. This young man was attached to Wolsey's suite, and no sooner did the King discover that he sought the society of the ladies-in-waiting very frequently and conversed apart with Anne as often as possible, than he spoke to the Cardinal on the subject. Wolsey summoned his father from the north, and the Earl, when he learnt what was going on, threatened to disinherit his son unless he at once broke all connection with Anne; and Lord Percy, although deeply attached to her, as their subsequent story proves, yet had not sufficient spirit or moral courage to defy his stern father and the powerful prelate who, with the arrogance and impudence of a *parvenu*, in the presence of the menials of the court, rated the high-born youth for his conduct. From this moment dates the future Queen's dislike to the proud priest whose ruin she ultimately accomplished. Lord Percy, in accordance with the parental wishes, married Lady Mary Talbot, the daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, in 1523, and Anne was sent back to France and to her former mistress, Queen Claude. This pious lady endeavoured to make her court a model of virtue and decorum, carefully watching over her maidens and employing them in embroidery work and other quiet pastimes, so Anne must have found it a pleasant change when at the death of Claude, in 1524, she transferred her services to the sister of King Francis, the Duchess d'Alençon, Queen of Navarre, who was noted throughout Europe for her cleverness and fascination of manner and sprightly conversation. Naturally lively and witty, and with a wonderful facility in acquiring whatever was taught her, Anne must have learned much while under the roof of the gay Marguerite; but it is too probable that her moral principles were not improved, and that she here acquired that vivacity and levity, often passing the bounds of strict propriety, with which she was in after years charged; but it must be admitted that during her residence in France, although much admired, her reputation was never assailed.

In 1527 Anne returned to England and to court. She left France because the relations between Henry and Francis, hitherto friendly, now threatened war. The reappearance of our heroine in the sober court of Queen Katherine again attracted attention. Hither she transported all the wiles and graces learned of the bewitching Marguerite; and last, but not

least, her taste in dress, which was rare and judicious, and at once set the fashion. She was very clever in inventing new modes, which were copied by the other ladies. King Henry, whose liking for Anne Boleyn her absence had only made stronger, now renewed his attentions, and from this time the fatal ambition to wear a crown entirely possessed the young maid of honour; yet she was far too well skilled in the art of fascination to give her royal lover too much encouragement. At one time, when she had retired to Hever Castle, Henry paid the family an unexpected visit, but he had his pains for nothing. Anne, perhaps at her father's instigation, feigned illness and confined herself to her chamber till he had departed. To secure her continual residence at court, Henry now advanced Anne's relations, creating her father Earl of Ormond, with the office of treasurer of the royal household; he also made her brother Viscount Rocheford, and her sister Mary's husband, William Carey, a gentleman of the privy chamber.

Anne had not long returned to the court when Henry presented her with a costly jewel, to which gift she attached so little importance—it being then a common custom to make similar ones—that either out of bravado or in all sincerity she wore it without fear of misconstruction. Emboldened by her gaiety of manner, Henry some time after avowed his flame, the confession of which excited her real or pretended anger and indignation; nor was it until after many apologies and entreaties for pardon that he was forgiven. It was on this occasion that Anne is said to have used the words which explain much of her conduct: “Most noble King, I will rather lose my life than my virtue, which will be the greatest and best part of the dowry I shall bring my husband; your wife I cannot be, both in respect of my own unworthiness and also because you have a queen already; your mistress I will not be.” An anecdote of Anne and the Queen, who always treated her with the utmost kindness, will serve to show that Mistress Boleyn's designs were well understood at court. Katherine and her maid of honour were one day playing at cards; Anne hesitated a moment about playing a king. “My Lady Anne,” said the Queen, “you have the good luck to stop at a king; but you are not like others, you will have all or none.”

The first time King Henry made public demonstration of his partiality for Anne was in May, 1527, when, at a great entertainment given in honour of the departing French ambassadors, he chose her for his partner in the dance. At this time Wolsey was absent from England, engaged on “the King's secret matter,” as the intended divorcee was first called; it was not till his return that the Cardinal discovered who was to be Queen Katherine's successor.

Among the persons whose society Anne preferred were the celebrated Earl of Surrey,

her cousin, Sir Thomas Wyatt, and her own brother, Lord Rochford, a trio whose literary acquirements, refined taste, and elegance of manner were remarkable at a period when these qualifications were far from being general. They, too, took especial delight in her company and encouraged her in her taste for literature. By her coquetries with Wyatt, her old playfellow and devoted slave, though he had a wife of his own, Anne sometimes aroused the King's jealousy.

Conversing with her one day while she worked, Wyatt playfully snatched from her a jewelled tablet which hung by a lace from her pocket, and suspending it round his neck, beneath his dress, refused to return it, though repeatedly pressed to do so by her. Henry remarking that Wyatt frequently hovered round Anne, entreated her to give him a ring, and wore it on his little finger, intending on the first occasion, by displaying it to Wyatt, to make him sensible of Anne's preference for himself. Playing at bowls shortly after with several nobles and gentlemen, among whom was Wyatt, Henry affirmed a cast to be his, which the others declared not to be so; he, pointing with the finger on which was the ring, repeatedly addressing himself to Wyatt, said, "I tell thee, Wyatt, it is *mine*," laying peculiar emphasis on the word mine. Wyatt recognising the ring, took the jewelled tablet from his breast, and holding in his hand the lace by which it was suspended, replied, "If it may please your majesty to give me leave to measure it with this lace, I hope it will be *mine*," and he stooped down to measure the cast. The King recognised the tablet as belonging to Anne, angrily spurned away the bowls, and exclaimed, "It may be so, but then I am deceived!" and broke up the game. He then hastened to the lady of his love, to whom he revealed his suspicions, which she quickly dissipated by declaring the truth, and Henry became more in love with her than ever in consequence of the jealous pangs which for a moment had tortured him.

During the earlier part of his negotiations with Rome for a divorce, Henry was anxious to conceal from the Pope that he desired it on any but conscientious grounds. In consequence of his increasing attentions to Anne the time-serving courtiers transferred to her the obsequious demonstrations of respect which they had formerly paid to Katherine; but the mass of the people loved and respected the injured Queen, and the feeling of resentment at her wrongs was so strongly manifested that Henry found it expedient to banish Anne for a time from court. Mistress Boleyn, now feeling her power over her lover, showed great impatience and indignation at this step, and angrily declared that if sent away "she would return no more." She maintained a sullen silence in answer to the loving and submissive letters which the King addressed to her during the two months she remained in the country, and when Henry, unable longer to endure her absence, at length

begged her to return, she would not do so till he had prepared for her a magnificent residence in London, Suffolk House, where she kept up an establishment separate from her family, and assumed much of the state of a queen, having her own trainbearers, chaplains, and ladies-in-waiting. Here she held levees which were more numerous attended than Katherine's, and Henry placed at her disposal much of the patronage in Church and State. The King took up his own lodging at York House (better known as Whitehall), in order to be close to her. He borrowed the mansion from Wolsey for the time, but he was so pleased with the stately pile, and found it so convenient, that he ever after kept possession of it. The French Ambassador of the day writes: "Mademoiselle de Boulan has arrived, and the King has placed her in very fine lodgings, immediately adjoining his own, and there every day more court is paid to her than ever *she* paid to the Queen."

While she held this questionable position, scandal was of course busy with Anne's name, and Wolsey, hoping that his fickle master would soon tire of his new plaything, purposely encouraged his intimacy, and delayed the divorce till Henry's desire to make her his queen should have passed away; but though, as her letters prove, Anne sometimes had misgivings, she and her family had set their hearts on her wearing the crown.

So long as Anne believed Wolsey to be acting in her interests, she affected for him the deepest friendship, but when she discovered that he was working against her she lost no time in bringing about his fall. She urged the King to send Gardiner to Rome a second time independently to plead for the divorce, and showed Henry certain letters which the Cardinal had written to Rome, by which she established the fact that he was playing false to his master. Those who uphold Anne Boleyn as a simple pious lady, the innocent victim of the cruel monster King Henry, represent her as one of the champions of the Reformation. It is certain that Anne, partly perhaps in opposition to Katherine's extreme orthodoxy, had a leaning to the Reformed faith, but it was the Church of Rome, and Wolsey as its representative, which formed a bar to her wishes even before she became acquainted with Cranmer. There may be some truth in the well-known story of her Bible, which must have increased her dislike to the all-powerful minister. Anne possessed a copy of Tyndal's recent translation of the Holy Scriptures, on which she set great value. It had been taken from her chamber by one of her ladies, who was examining it when a suitor snatched it from her and refused to give it back, although she told him how angry her mistress would be. The young man took it with him to the King's chapel and read it during service, and at its close he sat reading on, unmindful of what was passing around. The dean observing him, and wondering what could rivet his attention so closely, asked for a sight of the volume. Finding it was the forbidden book, he carried it to the Cardinal. Anne soon

discovered her loss, and having learnt the truth, all her resentment was aroused against the priest who had presumed to detain a book of *hers*. She lost not a moment in seeking the King, and entreated him for the restoration of her valued treasure. He not only effected this, but at her desire he studied it himself; hence the change in his opinions!

Anne was now more anxious than ever to remove Wolsey. The bills found against the Cardinal for the abuse of his power while in office, were the result of her increasing efforts to ruin him.

In October, 1530, Wolsey was compelled to resign the chancellorship and other offices at court, and Anne induced Henry to promise never to see him again. But although Anne endeavoured by every means she could devise to keep up the King's first anger against his favourite, she was not quite successful. He sadly missed the minister on whom he had been so long accustomed to rely. Anne's uncle, the Duke of Norfolk, who succeeded him in the administration, conducted affairs in a much less agreeable manner, and when some months later he heard of the serious illness of his former minister, the King dispatched his own physicians to attend him; and on learning that nothing would do him so much good as a kind message from himself, he sent him a ring, saying, "Tell him I am not offended with him in my heart for anything, and bid him be of good comfort;" and for fear of angering Henry by refusal, Anne, too, sent him, as a token, the tablet of gold that hung at her side.

Wolsey was no sooner recovered than Anne procured his arrest for high treason. The execution of the warrant was entrusted to the Earl of Northumberland, who, as Lord Percy, had been Anne's former suitor. He had not forgotten that to the Cardinal's interference he owed the wreck of the happiness of his life, and now took vengeance on his fallen foe by treating his prisoner like a common malefactor, even causing his legs to be bound to the stirrups of his mule. On delivering up the seals, Wolsey had resigned to the King the whole of his vast property—an act no less diplomatic than graceful, for the monarch had power to seize what he pleased; but the prelate hoped thus to propitiate his grasping master and his ambitious companion. Nor was he quite wrong; after a month's imprisonment, and the acknowledgment of his guilt of *praemunire* (that is, introducing papal bulls into England contrary to the law of the land), he was permitted to retire to his see at York with an income of four thousand pounds a year. Soon, however, he was arrested a second time, and would have been executed had not merciful death visited him at Leicester and released him before he could be brought to trial. His ruin and death sated the vengeance of an injured woman.

Even before the fall of Wolsey, Henry had issued orders to Queen Katherine that she

was to retire to one of the royal residences in the country and consider herself as no longer his wife ; Anne was created, by royal letters patent, Marchioness of Pembroke, and was always to be seen with the King in public. In 1532 Henry proposed to meet Francis I. in an amicable conference near Calais ; and through his ambassador it was intimated to the French king that if he wished to gratify the King of England he could do nothing better than invite Lady Anne with him to Calais, and entertain her there with great respect. Accordingly the invitation came, and the Marchioness, attended by a splendid retinue, accompanied Henry on his journey, and was magnificently entertained by Francis. Then the English king, not to be outdone in splendour, invited his brother of France to Calais, where was prepared a banquet even more sumptuous, and after supper Anne and seven other beautiful ladies entered the state chamber in masking apparel. Their dresses were most fantastic, and composed of cloth of gold slashed with crimson satin, puffed with cloth of silver and knit with laces of gold ; every lady took a lord, and in the course of the dance Henry "removed the ladies' vizors so that their beauties were shown." King Francis of course found himself dancing with Anne, behaved to her most graciously, and next morning sent her a present of valuable jewellery. In spite of this Anne, with the knowledge of etiquette gleaned from service in the courts of four different queens, must have felt more than ever how doubtful was the position she occupied, for it is to be remarked that none of the ladies of the French royal family had taken part in her reception, or in any way acknowledged her.

It is said that Francis advised Henry to make Anne Boleyn his wife at once ; and that, acting on this advice, as soon as he reached Dover the King was married to her in the early morning before very few witnesses. Other places are mentioned by various writers as the scene of this marriage, but it seems almost certain that it did take place somewhere in January, 1533. It was kept very secret, because Henry feared the unpopularity the measure was calculated to create, for the people protested against having "Nan Boulan," as they called her, for their Queen. However, in May of the same year, Katherine having refused to appear for trial when summoned to Dunstable by Archbishop Cranmer, the King's union with her was declared null and void, and a few days' later he was publicly married to Anne at Greenwich, a measure hastened by her pregnancy. Immediately after a proclamation for the new Queen's coronation was issued. Greenwich was Anne's favourite among the royal residences, and here, to please her, Henry laid out a fine park, planting the trees on the same plan as the stately avenues of Blickling, her old home.

Anne's coronation was attended with unusual splendour, as Henry did all he could to render her popular. Letters patent were sent to the proper legal authorities, directing

them to conduct Queen Anne, with all the accustomed honours, from Greenwich to the Tower, and "to see the city garnished with pageants, according to ancient custom, for her reception." "The Queen embarked at Greenwich in a state barge, escorted by no less than fifty barges, with awnings of cloth of gold or silk, emblazoned with the arms of England, and ornamented with various curious devices." Among these the Queen's was conspicuous. She had chosen a falcon holding a sceptre, and quiet observers who read beneath it the motto, *Me and mine*, must have remembered the pomegranate, and the words *Not for my crown*, which had floated from the same vessels only a few years back, and contrasted the temper of the ambitious Anne with that of the true Princess whom she displaced. "The lord mayor's barge," continues our historian, "was next to the royal one, in which, superbly attired in cloth of gold, sat Anne surrounded by her ladies. A hundred barges belonging to the nobility followed, magnificently ornamented with silver or cloth of gold, gliding on in harmonious order, and to measured strains of music. The river was covered with boats, and the shores so lined with spectators that one might think the metropolis deserted of its inhabitants, till one saw the immense throng collected in the neighbourhood of the Tower to witness the Queen's disembarkation. Next day Anne, attired in royal robes, was conveyed to Westminster in a litter, attended by a brilliant procession, where, after the coronation ceremony, the King gave the usual banquet and entertainments.

Anne was scarcely seated on the throne which she had so long striven to reach, when her troubles began. Her secret enemies were many and powerful. The Duke of Norfolk, her uncle, a bigoted adherent of the ancient faith, disliked her patronage of those who sought to overthrow it; he was piqued that the King should have overlooked the charms of his own daughter, the beautiful Lady Howard, and sought those of his niece, and he was bitterly jealous of the influence of her father and brother. In this mood he formed an intimacy with Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, a man more desirous of gratifying his own ambitious views than scrupulous in carrying them into effect. Anne's father, the Earl of Wiltshire, was dissatisfied that no higher honours had been conferred upon him when he became the King's father-in-law, and thought that his daughter might have done more for him; so the only true friend on whom the Queen could rely was her much-loved brother, George, Lord Rochford. Bound to her by his talent for literature and art, as well as by family affection, Anne confided to him all her thoughts and cares, and passed so much time in his society as to arouse the jealousy of his wife, a woman utterly unsuited to him, and who resented with bitter hate the indifference to her which Rochford could not conceal. This evilly disposed woman, as we shall see, was only biding her time to work her sister-in-law's destruction.

In the autumn the Queen gave birth to a daughter, when both she and Henry had confidently expected a son. Still, the King bore the disappointment well, and welcomed the infant with fatherly affection if not with joy, and caused an Act of Parliament to be passed proclaiming her heiress presumptive to the crown, in default of heirs male. All persons holding office in Church or State were now required to acknowledge the supremacy of the King and to swear fealty to his heirs by Anne; the two men who refused to do so were the Chancellor, Sir Thomas More, and Bishop Fisher, of Rochester, conscientious supporters of papal authority and of the rights of the Princess Mary. When the unfortunate More was imprisoned in the Tower of London, his favourite daughter, Margaret, was permitted to visit him. He inquired of her how fared Queen Anne, and when told "There is nothing else in the Court but dancing and sporting," he said, "Alas! Meg, alas! it pitieth me to think into what misery, poor soul! she will shortly come. These dances of hers will prove such dances that she will spurn our heads off like footballs, but it will not be long ere her head will dance the like dance." More's knowledge of court life and his intimacy with King Henry, had given him an insight into the character of his sovereign which enabled him to prophecy truly. He and Fisher both suffered execution, and in less than two years Anne herself ascended the scaffold. Henry was playing at tables with Anne when the news of Sir Thomas More's execution was brought him. He looked reproachfully at Anne, and said, "Thou art the cause of this man's death," and leaving the game unfinished, went and shut himself up in his own chamber.

These and other severities practised against those who refused to take the oath of the King's supremacy and the new act of succession, while enacted for her benefit, yet made Anne unhappy, because they created a very strong prejudice against her. Accustomed as a private individual to receive homage from those around, she could not as a queen be satisfied without the admiration and love of the people.

When she heard of Katherine's death, Anne is said to have exclaimed, "Now am I indeed a Queen," and showed such indecent joy as to have disgusted Henry, whose fickle heart was moved for a moment by the thought of his first love. He shed tears as he read the touching letter she sent him.

As Henry began to tire of Anne he grew jealous of the consideration and respect shown her by the Reformers, and was vexed that the influence she had acquired over him should be so well known, and redound more to her credit than his own; still when again Anne gave hopes of becoming a mother, his tenderness seemed once more to revive, till a new beauty caught the royal eye, and unfortunately for herself, Anne one day discovered Henry

lavishing on Jane Seymour, one of the ladies-in-waiting, those caresses which she believed were bestowed only on herself. In her rage and dismay the Queen threw herself into a violent passion, which brought on her confinement prematurely. Her life was in imminent danger and the child, a son, was born dead. Henry was as angry as he was disappointed, and when he harshly upbraided his suffering wife she naturally, but most unwisely, retorted that his infidelity and unkindness had been the cause, and making the King even more angry, widened the breach between them.

From this day Henry sought to get rid of Anne. Now that Katherine was dead he began to think how much more politic it would have been for him to have waited patiently for that event, instead of making himself enemies abroad, embroiling the Church at home, and all for the sake of a woman of whom he was now tired. To divorce Anne would not be enough; she would in all probability outlive him, and he could not secure her non-interference with the succession of any offspring Jane Seymour might bear him.

It was soon well known that Anne's influence with the King was gone, and courtiers now turned from the setting to bow to the rising sun. Anne's secret enemies became her open foes. Lady Rochford had now an opportunity of gratifying her hatred of her sister-in-law. Set as a spy to watch the Queen, she brought forward a charge against Anne and her brother so terrible that only the vilest could imagine and the most vicious believe. Their frequent interviews, so natural between brother and sister, were made the pleas for her guilt; but the improbability of such a charge obtaining a shadow of belief induced her foes to seek others, and to accuse individuals holding offices in the royal household of being her paramours.

How near she stood to the brink of the precipice Anne was probably aware, but she continued to appear calm and courteous. Within the last year a change had come over her demeanour; the religion which she first adopted for worldly motives had steadily gained an influence over her. When at her intercession Hugh Latimer was released from prison, the Queen created the heretical preacher one of her chaplains, listened patiently to his exposition of those Scriptures of which she had long been a student. His fearless words of truth fell on her ears just as she was beginning to prove the emptiness of this world's vanities. From this time her charities became very extensive, she grew quieter in her demeanour, and spent much time with her maidens in making garments for the poor.

The last occasion on which Anne appeared in public was on the 1st of May, 1536, at a grand tournament held at Greenwich; and it was noticed that in spite of her anxieties she still looked exceedingly beautiful. Lord Rochford challenged Henry Norris, and the

Queen, like all present, looked on with interest at the playful combat, when the King abruptly left her side, and Anne, alarmed at his angry looks, soon after retired from the place. The reason the King gave for his anger was too trivial to be real. Anne, either by accident or design, dropped her handkerchief at the feet of Norris, who being heated in the course, took it up, wiped his face with it, and handed it back to the Queen on the point of his lance. Lord Rochford, Norris, and two other gentlemen were publicly arrested and sent to the Tower; but the Queen did not know what was their offence till next day her uncle, the Duke of Norfolk, accompanied by the keeper of the Tower, came to inform her that they were charged with being her paramours, and that she was to share their prison. She was told it was no use for her to deny her guilt, as the others had admitted it, and her protests of innocence and demands to see the King were disregarded; and Norfolk made her feel that the execution of his commission gave him satisfaction rather than pain. He dropped all marks of deference, and treated her with a disrespect which Sir William Kingston, the Tower keeper, a man noted for his cruelty, was not slow to imitate. However, Anne declared her willingness to "do the King's pleasure," and at once went on board the barge that awaited her. Arrived at the Tower, she was lodged in the state apartments where, only three years before, she had slept on the eve of her coronation. Lady Edward Boleyn and Mrs. Cosyns, the women appointed to attend and act as spies, reported every word she uttered, besides a great deal more which we may firmly believe never passed her lips. If in her adversity Queen Katherine had found but few friends, Anne was likely to have still less. Of all who had offered her adulation when she basked in the sunshine of her cruel husband's favour, Cranmer was the only one who attempted to speak in her defence, and Cromwell alone treated her with respect.

The Queen and her brother, Lord Rochford, were brought to trial on the 18th of May, in a hall within the Tower, before a selection of peers about twenty-four in number. The evidence and all account of the trial was subsequently destroyed, but it was the general opinion that nothing was proved against either the Queen or her courtiers. The only man who admitted the crime of which he was accused was Smeaton, a low-born musician whom Anne had patronised, but the belief in his perjury was all but universal. Having calmly listened to the contradictory evidence, Anne spoke bravely in her own defence—she was not allowed the assistance of counsel. But her eloquence was unavailing. Of those who sat in judgment, her old suitor, the Earl of Northumberland, alone was impartial, and he was so affected by the sight of his former love, a crowned queen, accused of the most revolting crimes, that he betrayed great agitation and went out of court to avoid giving judgment. When the sentence that she should be burnt or beheaded was pronounced

Anne uttered no cry, but, raising up her hands, exclaimed : "O Father ! O Creator ! Thou art the way, the truth, and the life ; Thou knowest that I have not deserved this death."

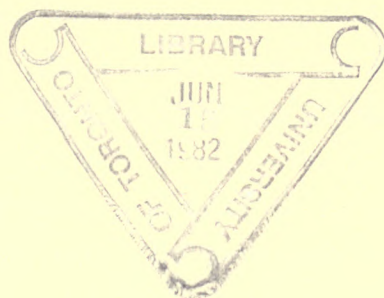
Henry added a further humiliation to the degraded Queen by proclaiming her daughter Elizabeth illegitimate and his marriage with her annulled. The plea for this step was Anne's having been contracted to the Earl of Northumberland previously to her union with him—a statement declared wholly untrue by the Earl himself. The fallen Queen now lamented that she had not shown more kindness to her predecessor's child, and entreated Lady Kingston to tell the Princess Mary so, and request her forgiveness.

On the 17th of May, Lord Rochford and the other accused persons were executed, and two days later the Queen shared their fate. She approached the block with a firm step and calm countenance, and maintained her fortitude to the last. As she knelt by the block her last words were, "To Jesus Christ I commend my soul !" She uncovered her neck, but, according to one account, refused to have her eyes bandaged, and the executioner could not bear to look on her face, so he induced some of his attendants to approach her on the right side, while he slipped off his shoes and came up on the left. As she turned to the direction whence she heard the steps the axe fell on her fair neck, and the horrible work was done. The cry of sympathy that arose from the crowd was drowned in the discharge of artillery which signalled to Henry that he was free to wed Jane Seymour. Another account says the Queen's eyes were bandaged by one of her women, and adds that the weeping ladies, among whom was Mary Wyatt, sister of the poet, who stood by her at the last, themselves tended the remains. It is generally believed that Anne Boleyn was buried in the Tower Chapel, beside her fellow-victims ; but there is a tradition that a plain black marble slab in Salle church, on her father's property, marks her last resting-place.

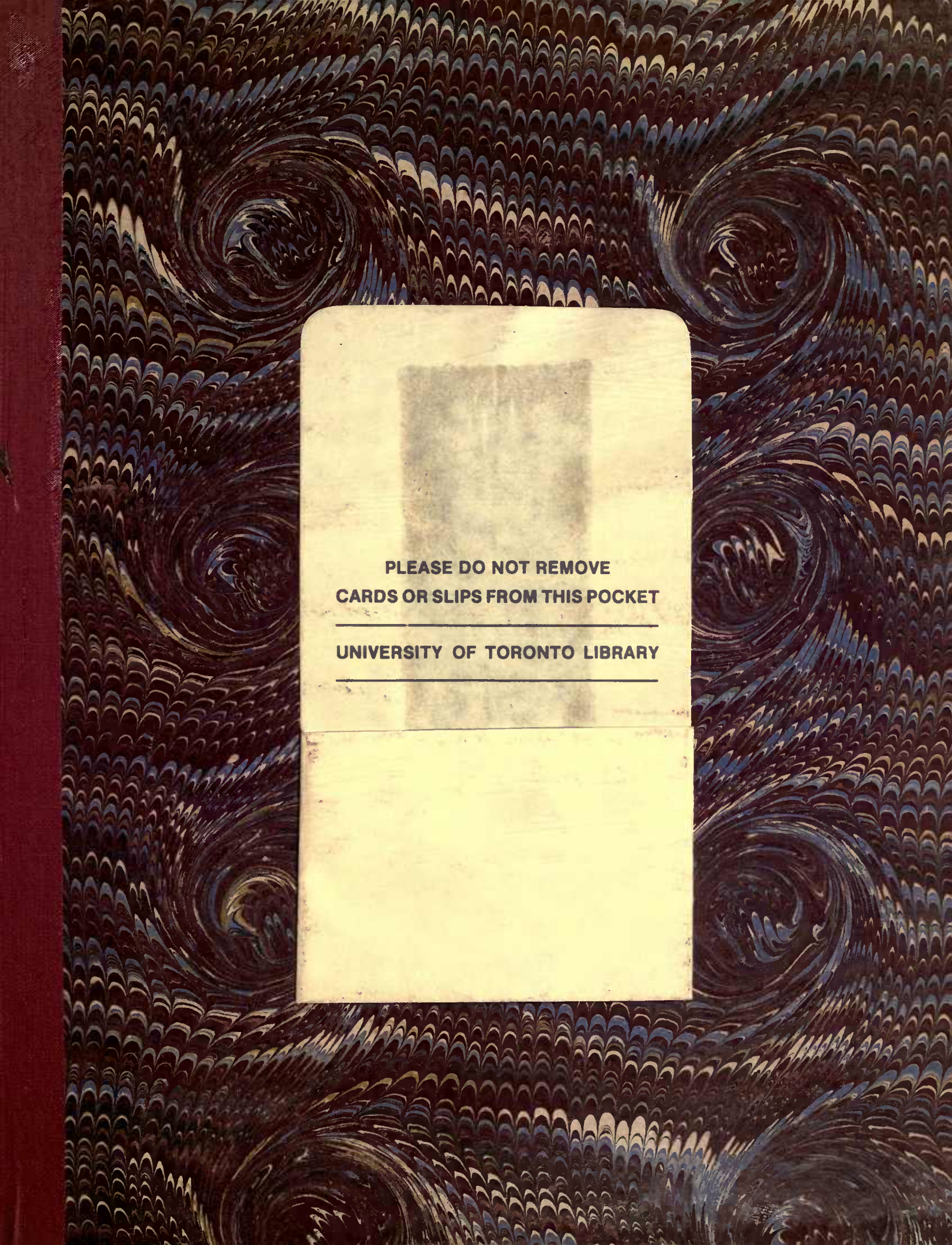
The sad fate of this unfortunate Queen points its own moral in the words which Shakespeare has put into her mouth :—

"Twere better to be lowly born, and range with lowly livers in content,
Than to be perked up in a glistening grief,
And wear a golden sorrow."

END OF VOL. I.





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